POLYHEDRON

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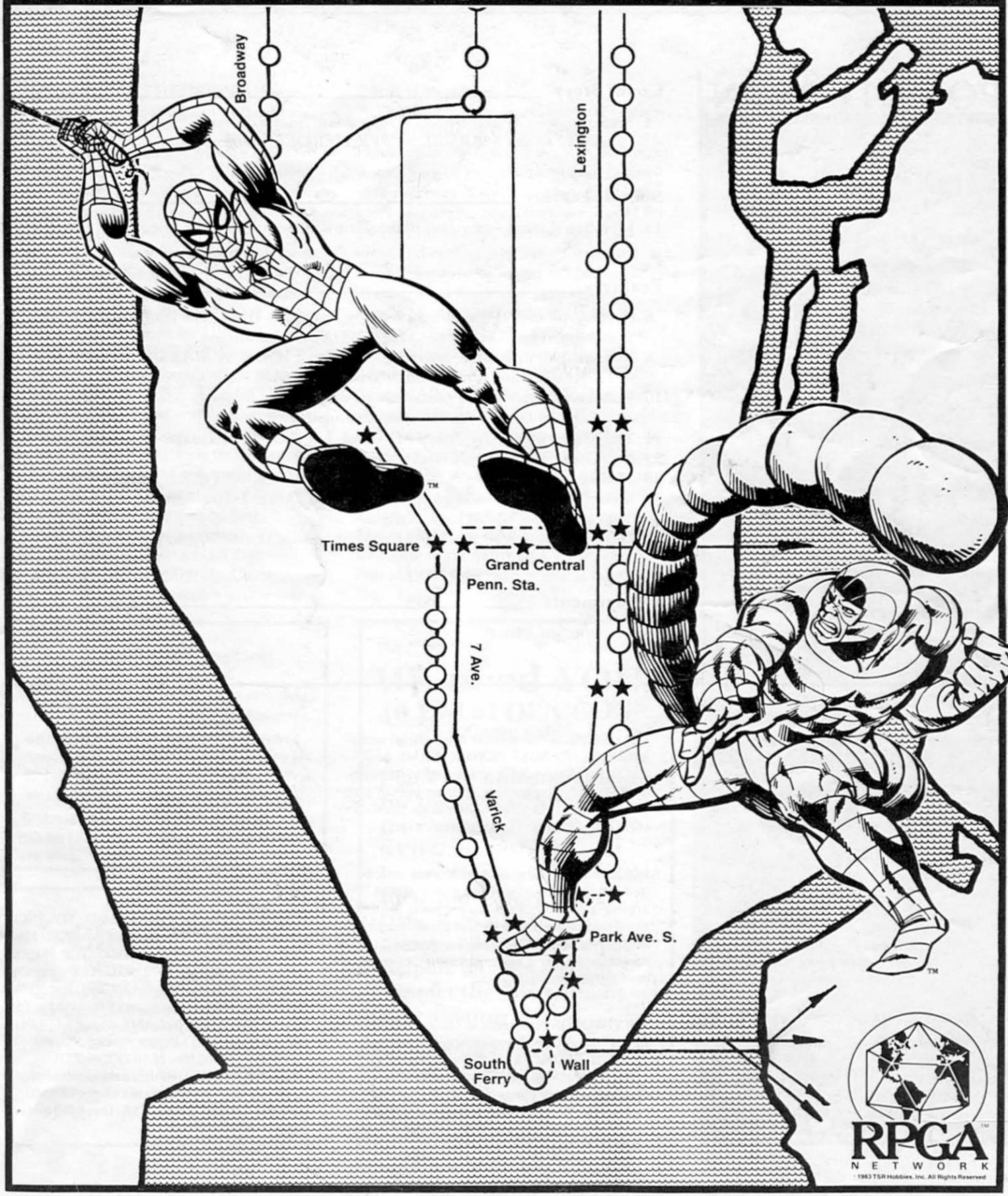
Newszine Issue 18



SPIDER-MAN, SCORPION: "TM" and ©Marvel Comics Group.

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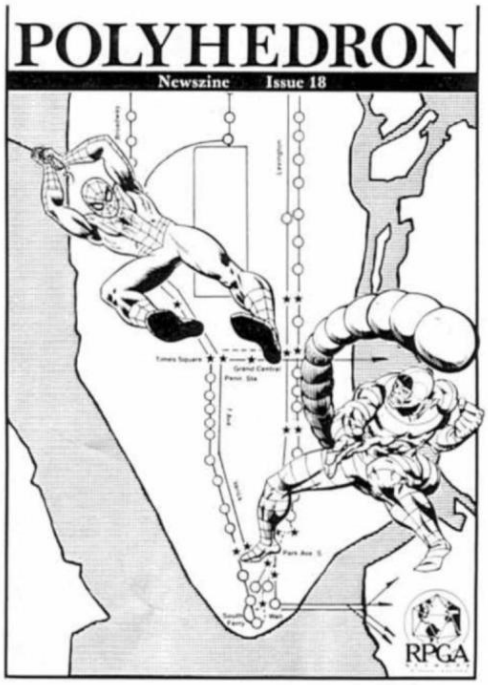

About the cover
Ray Silbersdorf designed the cover for #18, based on the *Encounters* article by MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game designer, Jeff Grubb. For more details see the article on page 5.

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POLYHEDRON™

NEWSZINE

Volume 4, Number 3
Issue #18

Editor
Mary Kirchoff
Editorial assistance
Roger E. Moore James M. Ward
Charles Ramsay
RPGA™ Network Coordinator
Penny Petticord
Production
Marilyn Favaro
Roger Raupp
Contributing artists
Roger Raupp Larry Elmore
Keith Parkinson Ray Silbersdorf
Sal Buscema Joseph Pillsbury
Marvel Bullpen Bob Walters

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. . . from the editor

This issue of POLYHEDRON™ Newszine, which I fondly refer to as the Marvel™ game issue, has a quite a few firsts in it. First, the inclusion of MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game articles: game designer Jeff Grubb wrote the *Encounters* article, and editor Steve Winter gives us a preview on the game itself.

Second, this issue contains unsolicited articles from three RPGA Network members: Art Dutra, Russ Horn, and Joseph Wichman. Art's article is a D&D® and AD&D® game feature for DMs who haven't taken advantage of the many ways DMs can get a larger share of the adventuring profits. For those STAR FRONTIERS® game enthusiasts, Russ Horn's *Layover at Lossend* scenario finds members of a Pan Galactic Corporation Scout and Exploration Team seeking temporary employment among Lossend's residents. And in *Two Cents*, Joseph Wichman responds to a previous *Two Cents* article by fellow RPGA Network member, Christopher Gandy. Christopher's response to Joseph's article will follow in next issue.

Third, this issue marks the first issue of POLYHEDRON Newszine with Penny Petticord at the helm of the RPGA Network. A lot of you have probably talked to her already if you've called TSR with game questions. She's been a member for a long time herself, and has lots of good ideas and enthusiasm. As a member, I'm looking forward to seeing the Network develop even further in her capable hands. (See her introduction at left.)

As for the rest of the issue, we've got the standard fair, plus some. Jim Ward details yet another GAMMA WORLD® Cryptic Alliance, *The Iron Society*, and also provides us with another "archetypical" character in the magic-user character class. In *Notes for the Dungeon Master*, Roger Moore covers the dos and don'ts for crossing different role-playing game systems. We also have four full pages of *Dispel Confusion*. And don't forget to take note of the GEN CON® 17 Game Fair notice in the back pages of the newszine. Enjoy! — MK

Hey you in Los Angeles!

Member Dov Freedman is starting an RPGA Network club and wants members from the greater Los Angeles area. He's moved, so write to him at 321 North Sycamore, Los Angeles, CA 90036, or call him between 7:00 and 11:00 at (213) 934-7562.

Classifieds

If you're looking for other gamers, send us the vital information, including name and address (and phone number if you like) in 20 words or less and we'll put it in the magazine.

Please type or print your classified legibly exactly as you want it to appear.

We need YOU!
to DM at GEN CON®
Game Fair

Plans are now being laid for the RPGA™ Network tournament for GEN CON XVII Game Fair. We will be needing a staff of qualified and experienced DMs. RPGA Network members wishing to participate as DMs should contact the tournament coordinator:

Doug Behringer
1545 Worthington
Columbus, OH 43201

Penny says hello

Hi fellow members! It's "introduction time" again. My name is Penny Petticord, and they tell me I'm to be the new coordinator for the RPGA Network, taking over for Linda Krause. The appointment was, to say the least, a surprise (about the magnitude of discovering who that little old man with the seven cute, fluffy canaries *really* is).

I've been a member from the start and always wanted to get more involved with the organization. Well, I got my wish — it would be tough to get much more involved than this. I don't have much to tell you about new directions right now because I'm still sorting everything out. And I'm not going to talk about myself because there are a lot more interesting things to do with the space in this newszine. I've been kicking around for so long that many of you already know me, and those who don't will become acquainted soon enough.

In the meantime I'd like to hear any of your comments or suggestions, so feel free to write. (All letter bombs will be forwarded to Roger Moore.) Next issue Mary will probably make me say something of real value, so until then, Best Witches!

Encounters

by Jeff Grubb

The scenario

Panic in the New York Subway! The Scorpion™ has taken over an IRT subway car which now rests on an abandoned sidetrack beneath 7th Avenue. The car's passengers have been chased off and are fleeing down the tunnel to the safety of a nearby platform. One passenger remains as a hostage — Publisher J. Jonah Jameson™. Scorpion has delivered an ultimatum: Spider-Man™ must show up within the hour or Jameson will die!

The ultimatum, carried by the fleeing passengers, is quickly relayed to the offices of the Daily Bugle. Freelance photographer Peter Parker™ heads for the subway to get pictures of the story. Peter's true interest in the crisis is revealed as the young photographer dashes into a closet to change into the Amazing Spider-Man, and swings off for his rendezvous with the Scorpion.

The characters

Spider-Man
Real name: Peter Parker, photographer
Fighting: Remarkable
Agility: Amazing
Strength: Incredible
Endurance: Incredible
Reason: Excellent
Intuition: Amazing
Psyche: Incredible
Health: 160
Karma: 110
Popularity: 40
Resources: Poor 4/20

Powers

Wall-crawling: Spidey sticks to normal wall surfaces, but must make an Agility FEAT for wet or slippery surfaces.
Spider sense: Whenever Spider-Man is placed in immediate danger, he must make an Intuition FEAT. If he makes the FEAT, he is warned in time to react.
Web-shooters: These shoot webs of Monstrous strength up to 2 areas away. The webs do not conduct electricity.
Spider-tracers: Spider-Man owns several miniature homing devices (range: one mile) each tuned to his spider-sense.

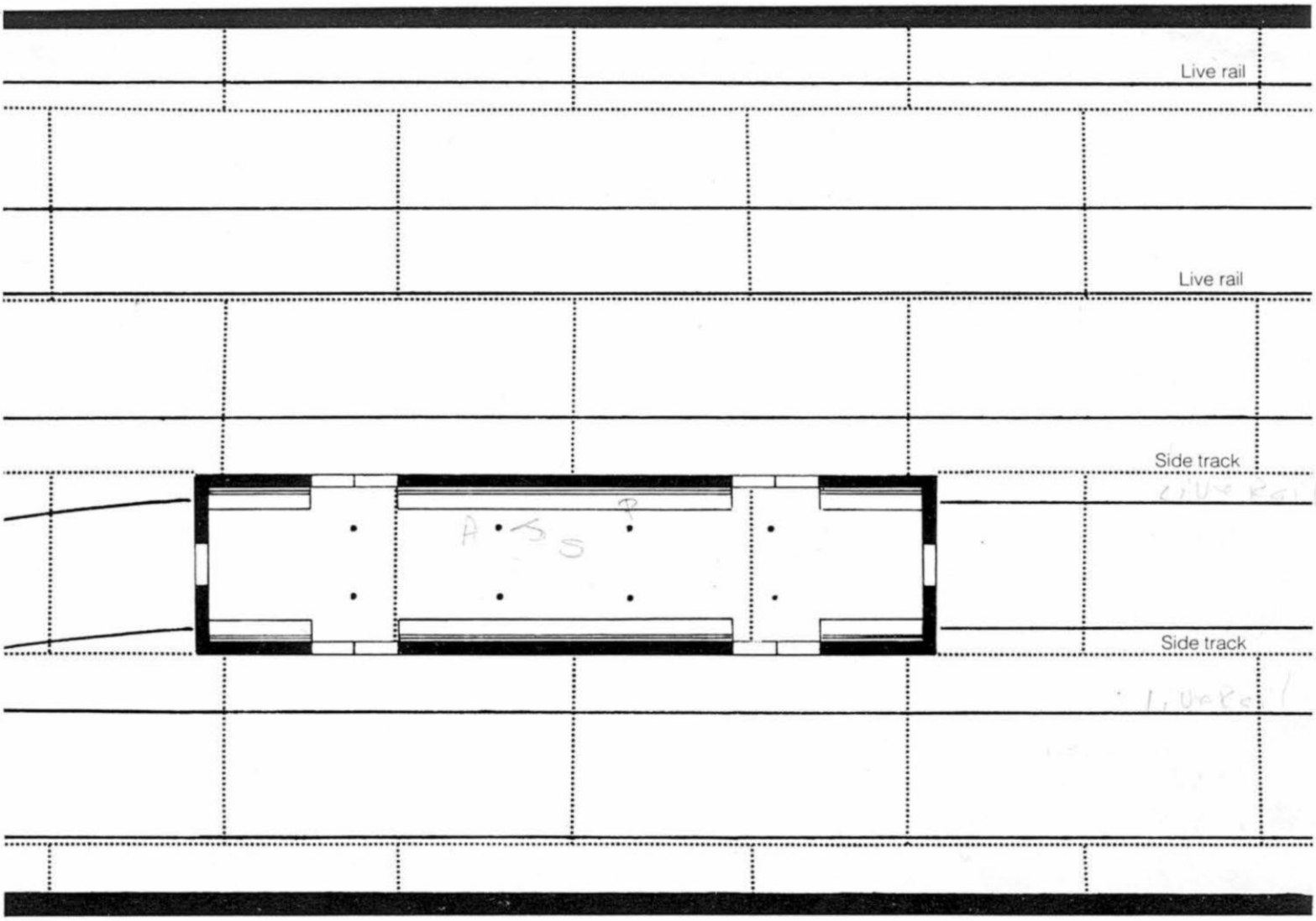
Scorpion
Real name: MacDonald "Mac" Gargan™
Fighting: Remarkable
Agility: Incredible
Strength: Incredible
Endurance: Incredible
Reason: Typical
Intuition: Typical
Psyche: Good
Health: 150
Karma: 22

Powers

Scorpion can climb any surface he can get a grip on, either by wedging his fingers into small cracks or creating handholds in concrete.
Scorpion's costume: Absorbs 20 points of damage from any attack due to its steel mesh and rubber construction, and provides Remarkable protection from electrical damage.
Scorpion's tail: is made of Incredible material. When it hits, it does Amazing (50 points) damage. The tail also contains a Plasma projector that does Remarkable damage at a range of 2 areas.

J. Jonah Jameson
Fighting: Poor
Agility: Typical
Strength: Typical
Endurance: Typical
Reason: Typical
Intuition: Typical
Psyche: Typical
Health: 22
Karma: 18
Resources: Excellent (20 r/ 500r)
Popularity: 38 (Remarkable)

J. Jonah Jameson is a hard-news journalist who has raised himself up from being a beat reporter to his present position as publisher of the Daily Bugle. As publisher, he has always had a prejudice against super-powered heroes, and partic-



ularly against Spider-Man (though Jonah pays Spidey's alter ego, Peter Parker, for photos of Spider-Man's exploits). A self-centered egotist who subjects his employees to long harangues and his reading public to overblown accounts of his own exploits, Jonah still feels he has his finger on the pulse of a great city.

The battle

Use the map provided, showing a section of the subway. The nearest entrance is 5 areas away, and comes up outside the Keash Mall on side one of the boxed game map. Scorpion and Jameson are in the center of the stopped car.

Scorpion has spent the past 45 minutes threatening Jameson and reminding the publisher of his guilt in the Scorpion's creation. Early in Spider-Man's career, Jonah paid for super-powered agents to be created. Mac Gargan was one such agent, intent on defeating Spider-Man. The transformation gave Gargan the proportional abilities of a Scorpion, and he was fitted with a wicked tail as a weapon. The transformation, however, drove Scorpion mad. Scorpion hates both Jameson, who funded the experiment, and Spider-Man, his original target.

When Spider-Man gets close enough, he can see Scorpion and Jameson in the car. If Spider-Man does not make himself known to Scorpion (who is lost in his own memories and hatred), Scorpion will decide by the third round that Spidey is not coming and will start thrashing Jameson. Scorpion will not use his full strength against Jameson, but will cause 10 points of damage per round. Jameson will try to dodge Scorpion's thrashing tail.

Once Spider-Man makes it known that he is on the scene (either by attacking Scorpion, calling out, or creating a disturbance in the tunnel), Scorpion will ignore Jameson and concentrate on smashing the wall-crawler. Jameson has no love for Spider-Man, and will try to flee the area. He will return seven rounds later, backed up by a 10-man SWAT team carrying sub-machine guns and grenades. The SWAT team has been briefed on how dangerous the two combatants are, and will open fire on both Scorpion and Spider-Man if the two are locked in combat.

Finally, Scorpion has shorted out the power in the two side tracks. The northern two tracks are carrying a live charge. Any character who is slammed into one of these areas must make an Agility FEAT or land on the third rail, taking 80 points of damage and will be unconscious for 5 rounds. Should this happen to Spider-Man, Scorpion will leave him for dead, and the web-slinger will be rescued by the SWAT team.

Aftermath

If Spider-Man defeats Scorpion, he gains 40 Karma points. If Spider-Man turns Scorpion over to the police, he gets an additional 30 points. If Jameson is injured, Spider-Man loses 30 points (and gets a blistering editorial in the Bugle). If Jameson is killed, Spider-Man loses *all* of his Karma points. If Spider-Man fights the SWAT team, he loses 20 Karma points. If Spider-Man must be rescued by the SWAT team, he loses 30 Karma points for a public defeat. If Spider-Man gets any pictures of the fight, he gets 10 Karma points.

™: Marvel Comics Group.

Cryptic Alliance of the Bi-month

The Iron Society

by James M. Ward

Part three in the series on GAMMA WORLD® game power groups details the *Iron Society*, also called *Mutationists*.

Geographic location

The strongest concentration of Iron Society members resides on a large irradiated island off the west coast of what was the United States. The intensity of the radiation ranges from 9 at the main city to 18 in several mile-long patches along the northern coast. The main city of the Mutationists is an awesome sight; towers and spires made of flat plates of crystal cap the city. This sheet crystal forms in all intensity 12 areas. The sheets are used as building materials for the beings of the island. The crystal sheets create an astounding, almost blinding, effect when the sun glances off their surface.

Although other beings have made their way to the island, the city itself has never been attacked, mainly because of the radiation. As a result, the people are quite peaceful while on the island. They only turn into fanatic killers bent on the destruction of all nonmutated life when away from their island. Further, the only weak link in the Mutationists' island organization is that food must be grown on the mainland and imported.

Inhabitants

The mutants of the Iron Society are all mutated humanoid or animal creatures. Not one of them remotely resembles a Pure Strain Human. Again, Mutationist groups are very aggressive and destructive when out of their environment. The total island has 30,000 inhabitants who are all members of the Iron Society. These beings tend to respect power.

The city itself has slightly over 9,000 mutated inhabitants, all of whom are totally resistant to radiation and its effects.

History

The Iron Society was born out of the rubble of the radiated areas of the world. Massive mutations were the rule instead of the exception during the early years of the war. The creatures that were created developed a hatred for the former civilization that spawned them. This hatred fixated on the few remaining Pure Strain Humans, and efforts were started to completely wipe out the race of man from the earth. Mutationists were only partially successful.

The Iron Society civilization contains an odd mixture of high and low tech materials. The level of sophistication in the society is about equal to that of the American Indian before the coming of the white man. There are groups that have taken Ancient equipment and adapted it for their aggressive use. Mutationists always have some sort of radiated weapon at hand, from high intensity radiated rocks to shotguns that shoot 18 intensity pellets.

In its own unorganized way the Iron Society seeks to take over the earth and bring its own version of peace to the land — a peace without humans. Because of their method for picking leaders (see below) and their tendency to travel in packs rather than organized units, the members of the Society have not been very successful. What power they have is the direct result of their immunity to radiation, but their cultural faults have hindered them in their expansion efforts.

Leader of the Iron Society

Violence within the city is always restricted to the Arena of Leadership. Since the very early days of the Iron Society the position of leader has been awarded to the strongest fighter. Once a year the leader of the Iron Society must submit to trial by combat. A contest is held in which all challengers fight each other to the death. The final winner of these games then has the chance to fight the leader of the Iron Society. The present leader, Keral Kon, has won seven such matches.

Keral Kon

HIT POINTS: 182
RANK: 20
MS: 18
IN: 14
DX: 18
PS: 8
CH: 18
CN: 18
ARMOR CLASS: 1
MUTATIONS: *Kenetic Absorption, Bodily Control, Regeneration, Taller, Skeletal Enhancement, Speed Increase, Absorption (Radiation), Genius Capability (Military), Mental Shield, Telekinetic Flight.*
WEAPONS: Stun derringer (3 shot) (WC: 12), Energy mace (WC: 5), Stun whip (WC: 6), Micro-missile launcher (WC: 16)

DESCRIPTION: Keral is 27 years old, and is the most logical of all the Iron Society members. He came to power using both his mental mutations and strategic abilities; few come near to equalling him in the arts of war. Unfortunately, he has no logical followers, and his plans are often negated because of the undisciplined actions of his subcommanders. His main interest is in creating an efficient "war machine," by training younger members of the Society who have not yet wandered far from the island. He hopes to develop a hundred or so of these into the disciplined core of a much larger army.

Another of Keral's interests includes breeding radiation-resistant mounts for his army. At the present time he has not succeeding in getting any animal to survive in more than intensity 5 radiation, but his breeding program is highly sophisticated and could produce positive results in a year or less.

Defenses of the city

The city relies on the fact that it is surrounded by fields of radiation. If any cryptic alliance could overcome this handicap they would be nearly unstoppable in an attack. They would have to contend with thousands of crazed mutants, however, which is enough to make even the bravest Knight of Genetic Purity cringe.

Concepts and policies

Radiation and all its effects are highly regarded by members. They spend a great deal of time surrounding themselves with unusual but usually nonlethal (generally inanimate) mutations created in the fields of radiation. Strange crystalline forms, unusual pieces of fused rock, and eerie-looking plant forms can often be found in the camps and homes of the Society members.

There is a general aversion to items that have survived intact after the holocaust (with the exception of radiated weapons). This is carried onto unmutated plants and animals, untouched places of the Ancients, and unpolluted waterways. It is often the assumed duty of Iron Society members to destroy or ruin such things for the good of the culture.

Materials common to other bases

Radiation of one type or another is always near an Iron Society community. Groups that travel away from radiated regions will carry weapons or radiated water from their former homes. Anything mutated is highly regarded. The use of the crystal sheets found in intensity 12 areas is fairly common in Iron Society structures. These sheets are easy to create homes with, and are liked by all mutated creatures for their beauty and usefulness. Members are fond of metal weapons of all types and especially like the use of the crossbow; several can be found in any given party of ten Mutationists.

A stylized hammer drawn on any vertical surface, usually to indicate a meeting place, is the symbol of Mutationists.

Legends

The most often told legend (with many variations) is about the young Mutationist who cried Robot. The story goes that there was a young mutant who was supposed to watch the Kepkep herd. He became bored and started shouting "Robot! Robot!" and laughed when his people came to kill it. To make a long story short, he tried this several times until no one came except an army of real robots who destroyed him and one of the 80 Kepkep beasts he was guarding (they're tough).

Another legend concerns a city named Dalis. Legend says that everything one could want is in Dalis, and that it is ruled by an Iron Society clan called Ui-ng. As a result of these legends, Dalis is the place all young Mutationists try to find when they go on their first trip from the island. None have succeeded.

REMARKABLE, INCREDIBLE, AMAZING

by Steve Winter

Face Front, Marvelites! It's here! You've heard about it! You've read about it! You've waited for it! Now you can play it!

The rumors have been running around for months, and now we can lay them to rest. The MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Role-Playing Game is finished. By the time you read this, you could be marching down to the local hobby shop or book store and buying the ever-lovin' thing for your very own.

What? You haven't snagged one yet? You want to know what's in it for you? Perk up your ears, fans. Your hard-earned money buys you a colossus cornucupia of comic book culture:

- a 16-page Battle Book with basic rules for fighting and moving
- a 48-page Campaign Book with extensive rules for super-hero campaigns
- 25 full-color, two sided, die-cut counters
- a 21½ × 33 inch full-color, double-sided map
- a 16-page adventure, "Day of the Octopus," and two 10-sided dice

So what, you say? We've seen it all before, you say? Nay, I say! You haven't seen anything like MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game before, not from TSR or from "those other guys." But talk is cheap, and so is type. You want proof, so here it is: a guided tour through the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game box.

Let's find out what goes into a Marvel Super Hero™ character. We're not talking about Albedo-Man and Captain Competence. These are the big boys: Spider-Man™, Captain America™, the Fantastic Four™. You don't start the game by rolling dice and generating statistics, you take a hero that you already know and love and start learning to play the game.

The first thing to learn is, what is this hero guy? Heroes have seven abilities: Fighting, Agility, Strength, Endurance, Reason, Intuition, and Psyche. Or FASERIP, as we like to call it. Fighting measures how well the hero can fight. Captain America, for example, is a fighting fury, whereas Dazzler™ is about as pugilistic as your average, beautiful nightclub singer. Agility and Strength are just what they sound like: physical coordination and physical strength. Endurance measures how well the hero stands up under strain, how quickly he recovers from wounds, and how resistant his system is to poisons and nasty environments. Reason measures smarts, but it also measures familiarity with technical equipment and the ability to think logically. Intuition is a sort of sixth sense, as well as wits and common sense (some heroes are just more in tune with the cosmos than others). And finally, Psyche is like willpower, but it also measures the hero's capacity to deal with magic, either by resisting its effects or wielding it himself.

Instead of assigning a number to each of these abilities, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game uses ranks. Each ability is ranked Feeble, Poor, Typical, Good, Excellent, Remarkable, Incredible, Amazing, Monstrous, or Unearthly. No more boring "I'm going to pick him up with my Strength, which is 53." Ho hum. Now you can look the Judge in the eye and announce, "I'm picking him up with my Amazing Strength and tossing the reprobate through the wall!"

Each rank has a number, too. Rank numbers help determine how much damage a hero can dish out and how much he can

take, among other things.

The seven basic abilities don't change during the game, unless something awful happens. Besides them, a hero has four other variable abilities: Health, Karma, Resources, and Popularity. A hero's Health equals the sum of his Fighting, Agility, Strength, and Endurance rank numbers. His Karma (which I'll explain in a minute; cool your jets) starts out equal to the sum of his Reason, Intuition, and Psyche rank numbers. Resources represent money, credit, possessions, and other material wealth. Popularity is just what it sounds like. The public's opinion of a hero tends to go up and down, and has an important impact on how effective a hero can be.

But wait, you say? Isn't this "MARVEL SUPER HEROES™" role-playing game? What about the "Super" part?

Each hero has several super powers, explained in detail on his character information card, highlighted by a full-color illustration of the hero. Like abilities, each super power has a rank, from Feeble to Unearthly.

OK, you've got your hero, you know everything there is to know about him, and you're itching to start playing. How does this thing work? A fair question!

When heroes do the things that make them heroes, they are performing FEATs: Functions of Exceptional Ability or Talent. When Spider-Man shoots a web and snags a grenade out of the air, that's a FEAT! When the Thing™ rips up a concrete abutment, that's a FEAT! When Reed Richards pours a glass of milk, that's not a FEAT (unless he's pouring with his eyes closed).

So Spider-Man shoots his web at the grenade that's looping its way toward the mayor's car — what happens next? The player rolls percentile dice and consults (fanfare of trumpets) the Universal Table!

The Universal Table is an exquisite little invention that does everything, with no moving parts. The 10 ability ranks are listed across the top, plus three extras: Shift 0, Shift X, and Class 1000. Dice roll ranges are listed down the left side. The player cross-indexes his dice roll with the character's ability rank, and the table gives him a color: white, green, yellow, or red. The color tells the player what happens: nothing, something, something real good, or something tremendous.

If players want, it can be as simple as that. On the other hand, if players want, it can be a lot more detailed. The Battle Effects Table gives specific effects for specific actions, depending on what color came up on the Universal Table. For example, when Captain America throws his mighty shield, he could miss his target entirely, hit it, hit it exactly the way he wanted to (Bull's-eye!), or hit it so hard he almost kills it. When Cap punches a bad guy, he might just fan the air, or hit the villain in the jaw, or knock him down, or knock him into the next county. It's fast, it's flashy, and best of all, it's fun! Everything players and judges need to play wall-smashing, head-bashing, villain-thrashing Marvel® battles is on one handy table.

And for those who complain that dice play too big a part in role-playing games, we proudly introduce Karma. Karma is like cosmic brownie points; when the universe likes you, you can't be stopped. But when the universe has other matters to think about, watch out! Players can use their characters' Karma to raise or lower their FEAT dice rolls. Once Karma is used, it's gone, Jack. Characters get it back by doing what they're supposed to, in the cosmic order of things: heroes by being heroic, and villains by being villainous. But beware the day when the Karma dries up; even super powers won't help when Lady Luck turns her back.

But wait! There's more! That's just the first book! Sixteen pages! There's still a 48-page Campaign Book full of advanced rules, optional rules, campaign rules, vehicle rules, and lots of other nifty stuff.

The Campaign Book starts out with more information on heroes: what they can do, and how various heroes compare to each other. Then it launches into details about money, finances, jobs, and public opinion. Let's face it, part of what makes Marvel® Comics great is that Marvel® heroes live in the real world, with real cares. They face problems in their personal lives that are as compelling and time-consuming as their public lives: problems with money, jobs, friends, relatives, loved ones. Add to that the average citizen of Manhattan, who owes a huge debt of gratitude to his super-powered protectors, but can be pretty stingy when it comes to acknowledging that debt. Hence, MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game goes into areas that have been ignored in the past, because there's more to a super hero than meets the eye.

What else is in store? Well, there's magic, courtesy of Earth's Sorcerer Supreme, Doctor Strange™; vehicles magnificent and mundane; inventions and electro-mechanical devices to amaze the most jaded technophile; background information on other dimensions, animals, NPCs, the law, and trials; a look at the world from the bad guys' perspective; and some tips for the game Judge on how to manage his players and his campaign that'll just knock your socks off!

Last, but not least, is "The Origin Of . . ." Sure, this is the MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ game, and Marvel's® heroes are as exciting as they come, but some people like to branch out, to move into uncharted territory. The last ten pages of the book explain how new, original heroes are created, and how any of the heroes from Marvel® Comics, past or present, can be brought into the game. And since everyone will ask if I don't just blurt it out, here it is: there are 60, count 'em, 60 powers, in 10 categories. But that isn't really accurate, because a lot of those are general powers that could manifest themselves in lots of ways. After all, a hero doesn't wake up one morning with super powers that he understands fully and controls perfectly. Heroes discover their capabilities and limits on the job, and so do Marvel Super Heroes™ characters. The game describes pretty specifically what is possible, but only experience (and some negotiation between Judge and player) reveals the true extent of a super power.

And, of course, we wouldn't give you this titanic treasury without including a mind-boggling tale of action and suspense, in the Mighty Marvel Manner! We proudly present "Day of the Octopus," a 16-page adventure starring everybody's favorite nemesis, Doc Ock! This time, the ever-nasty doctor is unleashing his 30-foot menace, the Octodroid, on the unsuspecting inhabitants of the Big Apple. Players can take the parts of Spider-Man, Captain America, the Fantastic Four, Captain Marvel™, or Wolverine™ to save the city that never sleeps from a nightmare of destruction!

And there's plenty more where that came from! The second and third adventure modules — "Breeder Bombs" starring the Uncanny X-Men™, and "Time Trap" starring the Mighty Avengers™ — are available as you read this, or will be shortly. The MARVEL SUPER HEROES™ Judge's Screen and Heroes' Guide to New York is another goodie to ask for at your friendly, neighborhood hobby shop. In the works or on the drawing board are adventure modules featuring Daredevil, the Fantastic Four, Alpha Flight™, the Hulk™, and the whole cast and crew of Marvel's® SECRET WARS™ epic. Keep your eyes open, true believers, because you won't want to miss one spine-tingling, pulse-pounding moment!

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KOBOLDS AND ROBOTS AND MUTANTS WITH WINGS

These are a few of my favorite things

by Roger E. Moore

In the section on "The Ongoing Campaign" in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*, AD&D® game referees are encouraged to adapt scenarios and material from other role-playing games into their campaigns. The idea is to provide a wide variety of adventures and to keep the game campaign from going "stale" ("What, orcs again? I'm sick of orcs.") Characters from AD&D and D&D® games can even be completely adapted into other gaming systems, so they may adventure through the worlds of post-holocaust America, outer space, the Old West, gangster-controlled cities of the 1920s, and so forth. This is certainly easier than adapting the games themselves into AD&D game statistics.

As the *DMG* notes, the trick is to ensure the continuity of the characters from one game system to another. This is a difficult process. Anyone who attempts to convert D&D or AD&D game characters to the GAMMA WORLD®, TOP SECRET®, BOOT HILL®, STAR FRONTIERS®, or GANGBUSTERS™ games will quickly run into a great many roadblocks and dead ends.

In general, it isn't necessary to have conversion systems from every role-playing game to every other such game. Few GANGBUSTERS games will involve bootleggers hurled back in time to the 1880s or into the far future; magic doesn't play a part in STAR FRONTIERS games, and spies rarely find starships. The AD&D and D&D games are more open to campaign crossing since they are fantasy based; the concept of alternate worlds and universes is an integral part of these game systems.

The most frequently used campaign crossover exists between the GAMMA WORLD game system and the D&D/AD&D game duo. Converting characters from one system to the other is fairly easy, as outlined in the *DMG*. The GAMMA WORLD game was derived from an earlier science-fiction game produced by TSR, Inc., called *Metamorphosis Alpha*, which was closely modeled on the D&D

game. Statistics like strength, constitution, dexterity, intelligence, and charisma are rolled on three 6-sided dice in each system. Wisdom and mental strength, from the AD&D® and GAMMA WORLD® games respectively, are interchangeable as noted in the *DMG*.

Other role-playing games not made by TSR, Inc., may be used, of course. Some of these use similar methods of creating characters, though they will always have some major differences. For the most part, the game referee will be on his own when trying to figure out conversions between the different game systems (such as from Hero Games' CHAMPIONS™ game to AD&D gaming, and back).

It should be noted that when changing a character from one game system to another, the referee should be aware of how experience and skills are gained. For example, in GAMMA WORLD gaming, a character can gain charisma through experience; this doesn't happen with D&D®gamecharacters, and they should not be allowed to permanently gain charisma by this method. A game referee could have a temporary increase in charisma occur for an AD&D or D&D game character adventuring in the GAMMA WORLD game setting. When the PC goes back to his home universe, however, these charisma points are lost and the character should gain experience from the adventure as he usually does (this could prove tricky when deciding how many XPs a mutant 50′ lizard is worth).

Developing game hybrids and crossover campaigns is very appealing. One of the most humorous adventures that I remember running involved three different role-playing games at once. It was let slip to the players that I was going to run an adventure in which their characters were hurled into the far future. Everyone was encouraged to bring their favorite AD&D game characters, fully prepared for the fun to come. A mixed bag of adventurers appeared and happily jumped into the *Well of Many Worlds* that two sages asked them to test out.

Sadly, instead of going into the future the characters were turned into rabbits and had their personal statistics converted to the BUNNIES & BURROWS™ game system (produced by Fantasy Games Unlimited). The B&B game presents a world much like that in the novel *Watership Down*; characters become intelligent rabbits that go adventuring through farmyards and such. The look on the players' faces when I presented them with their new character sheets (carefully completed beforehand) made it worth listening to all the horrible names they called me afterwards. To make it worse, the players were also given tiny rabbit miniatures, each carefully painted with the same eye and fur (hair) colors of their AD&D game characters.

Finally, the characters discovered that they were being placed in a scenario derived from Chaosium's CALL OF CTHULHU™ game and had to fight rats which could summon minor servants of the Cthulhoid gods. It was an amusing evening (despite the names they called me).

If this sort of thing appeals to you as a referee or player, you may wish to develop a hybrid campaign and see how it works. Be warned, however, that excessive "contamination" from one game system to another may ruin the campaign as a whole. If a bunch of first-level nerds in a D&D game campaign get their hands on laser rifles from the GAMMA WORLD game, campaign balance falls apart. Game referees should limit the power and number of items taken from one universe to another, or may vary the effect of such items if they feel it necessary. Thus, a bazooka in an AD&D game world might fire bananas, laser pistols will only work as flashlights, and so on. Use your best judgement.

To serve as a bridge between the AD&D and GAMMA WORLD game worlds, the following new monster is presented. Kobalts can easily form the link needed to interest AD&D game players in having their characters visit the GAMMA WORLD game environment, or *vice versa*. Are they *really* just blue-dyed kobolds?

Kobalts

AD&D® game statistics

FREQUENCY: *Very rare*
NO. APPEARING: *20-80 males (plus others; see below)*
ARMOR CLASS: *8 (leather equivalent)*
MOVE: *9″*
HIT DICE: *3 (4 hp minimum; note Heightened Constitution bonus to hp)*
% IN LAIR: *60%*
TREASURE TYPE: *D; see below*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1 (2 with bows, more with technological items)*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type; bite for 1-2*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Magic and/or technological items; some have mutational attacks*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Magic and/or technological items; radiation and poison resistance*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
INTELLIGENCE: *Exceptional*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful neutral*
SIZE: *S (3 ½′ tall)*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *No true psionics, but may possess psionic-like mutations*
LEVEL/X.P. VALUE: *III/110+4/hp base value (high intelligence and poison/radiation resistance); note that some individuals may have missile weapons, weapons doing great damage, or other magical/mutational enchancements that will raise their base x.p. value*

GAMMA WORLD® game statistics

NUMBER: 20d4 males (plus others; see below)
MORALE: 1d6 + 4
HIT DICE: 4d6 (note Heightened Constitution bonus to hp)
ARMOR: 6 (leather equivalent)

LAND SPEED: 9/900/15

MS: 1d8+10 IN: 2d4+10 DX: 2d6+6
CN: 1d12+14 CN: 1d4+14 PS: 2d6+5

ATTACKS: 1 bite (1d2 damage)

MUTATIONS: *Infravision, Heightened Constitution, Heightened Intelligence, Modified Body Part (tougher skin)*

In the most ancient archives may be found references to a powerful arch-mage who located an unusual alternate universe. Creatures of strange design roamed this world; the landscape was devastated by fire and war. The arch-mage summoned an army of goblins, orcs, and allied monsters, armed them with the best weapons and equipment, set off into that forsaken land to make war upon its inhabitants, and found an empire from which to raid other worlds and planes. None of that host returned; the army was destroyed by savage beasts with incredible powers and by a sickness that could not be cured. Subsequent authorities now believe that the only survivors were the smallest creatures who were best able to hide deep in the earth and adapt to the new land.

Those authorities were correct. The only survivors of this raid were kobolds, and the new land wrought its changes on them in return for their survival. Now calling themselves kobalts, these creatures have picked up a number of beneficial mutations from the radiation in their environment. Their *Infravision* allows them to see any heated body at up to 60 meters (66 yards) at night or in darkness of any kind. They may detect the slight warmth that plants emit and find places on the ground where beings rested within the last hour; this latter ability allows

them to track parties at night with 90% accuracy. However, their daylight vision has worsened, and they are -2 to hit opponents in direct sunlight. They are blinded for 1-4 melee rounds by sudden and close heat flashes (such as laser shots, *Fireballs,* lightning, or explosions), within 60 meters of them in a dark environment. When using heat-producing technological weapons or anticipating the use of same by opponents, kobalts wear protective goggles or helmet visors that reduce their *Infravision* to 30 meters, but that completely prevent blindness.

Kobalts have a tough, leathery scaled skin with a deep cobalt-blue color. *Heightened Constitution* gives kobalts an 18 resistance vs. radiation and poison in the GAMMA WORLD® game universe, and a save vs. poison in the AD&D® game worlds of 02. Their *Heightened Intelligence* gives them average mental strength (equivalent to wisdom) of 14, and an average intelligence of 15; they add 4 points to die rolls when learning to use an artifact. They have an average physical strength of 12 (normal kobolds have a 9). Prolonged experience in underground living makes them 75% likely to detect slopes, 60% likely to tell new construction, and 50% likely to know the approximate depth underground and the direction of travel.

One kobalt in 20 (male or female) has developed the *Planar Travel* mutation, which links the GAMMA WORLD game universe with one AD&D game universe (that of the current campaign). The kobalt casting this psionic-like power may send up to 40 kobalts, including himself, between the two universes once a week; returning to the universe left behind is equally simple. Kobalts with this power are regarded as holy by their clan and usually travel with the clan leader.

The leader of a kobalt clan has 21-24 hit points and a retinue of guards (3-12) with 15-20 hit points each, protecting both him and the planar-traveling kobalts (PTKs). Another 4-16 guards with the same hit point range as above will be assigned as lair guards, crewing positions near the entrances. These guards are in addition to the other kobalts encountered.

The kobalt leader, PTKs, and guards are often equipped with heavier sorts of technological or magical armor. If the weapons they use permit it, they will use small shields to improve their armor class.

The leader of a kobalt clan possesses 1-3 technological artifacts from the table below and also uses magical weapons, if they exist in the treasure hoard and are of the right size. Distributed among the rest of the guards and the PTKs will be 2-16 other technological devices with 1-4 energy cells per device if required. The leader and PTKs always get the best weapons. There is a 15% chance that a colony of kobalts will possess a robotic or automotive device of some kind.

Kobalts have been encountered so infrequently in magic-oriented universes that they will likely be thought of as blue-dyed kobolds.

Females will be found in a kobalt colony, equaling 50% of the male population. Young kobalts are equal in number to about 10% of the adult males. 2-20 heavily protected eggs will also be found in the colony. Except for a few remarkable females who work through the hierarchy to become guards or are hatched with the *Planar Travel* mutation, most females and young are noncombative unless the colony is attacked. In battle, the non-guard males and females will carry an assortment of weapons including hand axes, short swords, daggers, short composite bows, javelins, and slings. Missile weapons will not exceed 50% of an armed force, unless it is a raiding party in which everyone has a missile weapon and a hand-to-hand weapon. These fighters will usually carry a small, light shield of plastic or wood.

Kobalts have been encountered so infrequently in magic-oriented universes that they will likely be thought of as blue-dyed kobolds. They use extreme care in planning any raids in the AD&D or GAMMA WORLD game universes, gathering intelligence through agents they can implicitly trust. Colonies of kobalts will go on raids into the AD&D game universe as infrequently as once a year, but the careful planning and the power of their technological weapons has allowed them to amass a class D treasure (see *Monster Manual*) and between 1000-8000 domars. Note that if an artifact from the GAMMA WORLD game is rolled up that none of the kobalts can use (such as a suit of man-sized Powered Assault Armor), it will be stored in the colony anyway and used for trading purposes. Kobalts enjoy bargaining as much as they do raiding, and do it more frequently, too. They use their financial resources to purchase more magical and technological equipment for their clan and to fortify their lairs. Kobalts have little desire to gain territory in either the AD&D or GAMMA WORLD game universes, preferring to remain virtually unknown and keep a low profile.

If confronting what appears to be a relatively weak party, the kobalts will demand all magical/technological items be turned over to them and will take a healthy cut of the party's money as well. Stronger parties are likely to be ambushed, but kobalts are not stupid and will avoid encounters with very tough adventurers, except through third parties.

Kobalts have a heroic mythos, having completely dissociated themselves from their old lawful evil religion, and will only rarely surrender. Kobalts are incredibly brave under the most trying circumstances, a positive result of their long battle to survive in their hostile homeworld. They are equally able to operate as merchants or bandits as suits them best.

If encountered in the AD&D game, kobalts will have the hit points and "to hit" probabilities of 3 hit-dice monsters. If found in the GAMMA WORLD game, they will have the hit points of 4 hit-dice (6-sided) monsters. While the type of hit dice changes from world to world, from 8-sided to 6-sided, the hit point range is about the same. The hit points of an individual kobalt do not change when passing from one universe to the next. When using ranged weapons, kobalts use the appropriate attack tables for weapon type in the GAMMA WORLD game; in an AD&D game world, ranged weapons are treated as missile fire with appropriate penalties to hit at 1/3 and 2/3 range distances. See the "Mutants and Magic" section of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for further information on integrating the AD&D and GAMMA WORLD game systems.

Any kobalt has a 1% chance of having an extra random mutation. If the mutation is beneficial, the kobalt may become a sergeant, guard, or leader.

Technological artifact table for kobalts

01-40	Pistol, random type
41-65	Energy weapon, random type
66-90	Grenade, random type
91-00	Any other artifact except robotic or automotive device.

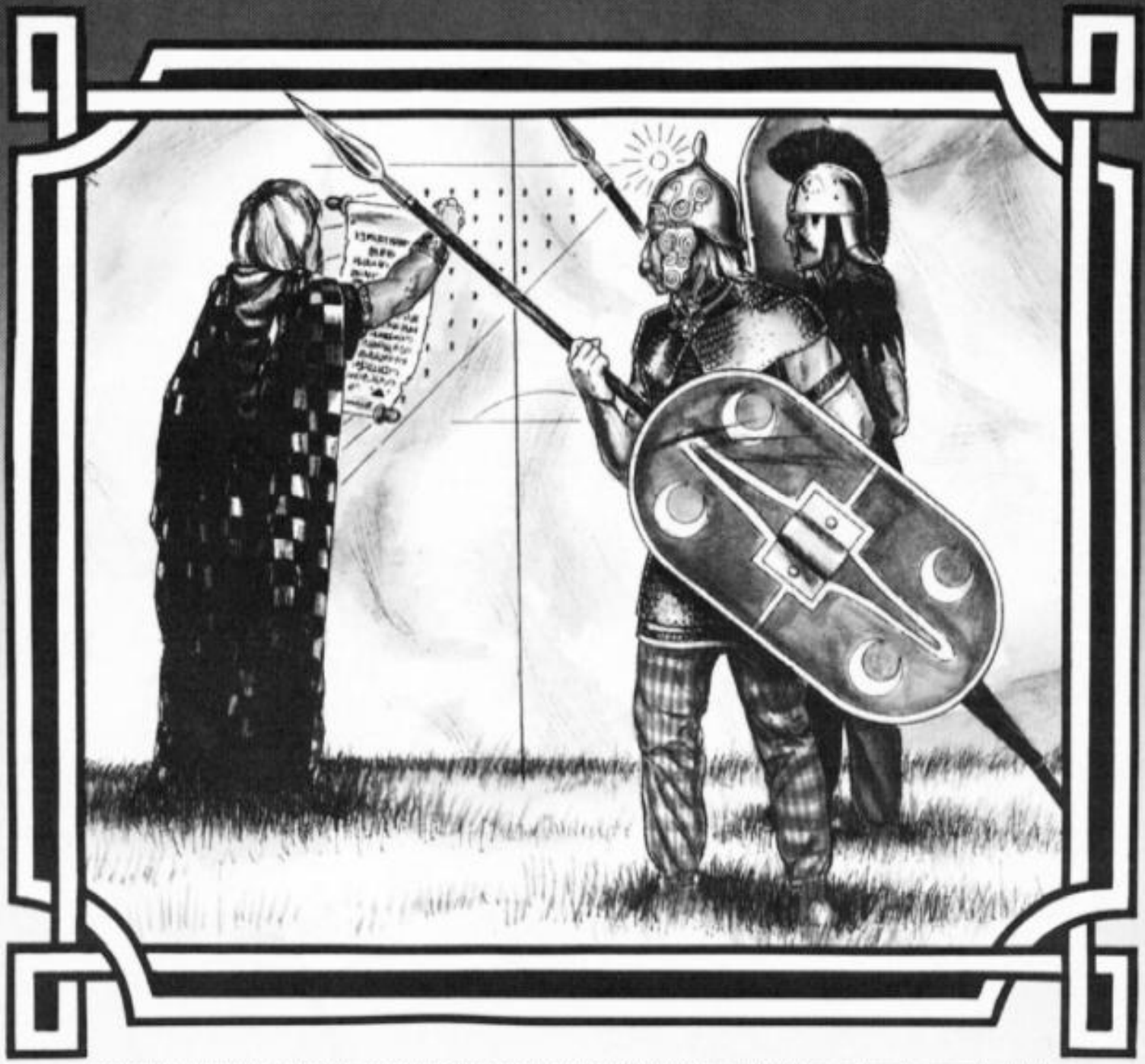
For ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Game

RPGA™ NETWORK MODULE 7

LLYWELYN'S TOMB

by Bob Blake

An AD&D™ Adventure for 6-10 Characters, Levels 4-7



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LLYWELYN'S TOMB

This mini-module was a tournament adventure originally run at the GEN CON® XVI Convention. It is the seventh part of the eight part epic adventure, *Prophecy of Brie*. This scenario can be run in either a tournament or a campaign setting. The Dungeon Master (DM) should read the adventure thoroughly before running it for the players. Background information concerning the *Prophecy of Brie* and the runnings of these modules was contained in *The Riddle of Dolmen Moor* in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine #16.

STOP! The rest of the information in the module is for the DM's use in running the adventure. If you plan to play in the adventure as a character, stop reading here.

Players' Background

Gwydion confirmed your notion that this quest is finally drawing to a close, and none too soon, considering the dangers and travails of the previous six adventures. Thanks to you, it is now common knowledge that the fulfillment of the Prophecy is imminent. The fruits of your other endeavors (a set of nine keys, Llywelyn's baldric, helm and scepter, a potion of restoration, a copy of the Lineage of Kings and the Incants of Ishcabeble) are now nestled securely in an oaken chest. The entire populace of Widdershin turned out to wish you well as you prepared to retrace your route up the Damrosil and through the Fens of Taravol to Dolmen Moor, the burial ground of Pellham's kings.

Before you looms the burial mound of Llywelyn the Just, and your first task is to lift the wards placed on the door by the wizard Ishcabeble. What dangers lie beyond, if any, are unknown to you, though the Brothers of Brie did tell you that this tomb was likely to be of two levels, and the king would be interred companionless on the lower. Finding the sarcophagus that holds Llywelyn's remains is your objective.

DM Information

The party is to find Llywelyn's body by entering the tomb and descending to the second level. The scenario is over when this is accomplished; happenings on the second level are covered in the next scenario. The first obstacle is the warding placed by the wizard Ishcabeble that guards the tomb itself. This is easily done by reading the Incants of Ishcabeble (previously recovered by the party).

Once the wards are removed, a locking mechanism is revealed. The set of nine keys (obtained in an earlier adventure) must be used to gain actual entry. Thiefly skills will not work.

Once the party is inside, they must deal with stone golems (and a hidden iron golem) and open either of the gates before descending to the level below.

Undead in the Tomb

A key factor in this scenario is undead, and the difficulty the clerics will experience in trying to turn them. The tomb is an evil area, with a penalty of -1 to all attempts to turn undead creatures; this penalty cannot be changed by any act of cleansing or purification. In addition there are **Bloody Bones**, new monsters that can further reduce a cleric's turning ability. Although specific tournament tables detailing the exact numbers of undead turned by the tournament clerics are given later, these are based on the **Extrapolated Matrix**.

To use this table, roll the normal turning attempt and subtract all modifiers (for area and **Bloody Bones**, a new monster). Compare the adjusted roll to the matrix; note that adjustments may bring a roll below zero. A result greater than or equal to the number on the matrix means the undead are turned, D means they are destroyed, and D* means 6+d6 undead are destroyed.

Extrapolated Matrix for Clerics Affecting Undead

Type of Undead	Level of Cleric Attempting to Turn									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9-13	14+
Skeleton	10	7	4	-2	-5	-8D	-11D	-14D*	-17D*	-23D*
Zombie	13	10	7	1	-2	-5D	-8D	-11D	-14D*	-20D*
Ghoul	16	13	10	4	1	-2	-5D	-8D	-11D	-17D*
Shadow	19	16	13	7	4	1	-2	-5D	-8D	-14D*
Wight	20	19	16	10	7	4	1	-2	-5D	-11D
Ghast	—	20	19	13	10	7	4	1	-2	-8D
Wraith	—	—	20	16	13	10	7	4	1	-5D
Mummy	—	—	—	20	16	13	10	7	4	-2
Spectre	—	—	—	—	20	16	13	10	7	1
Vampire	—	—	—	—	—	20	16	13	10	4
Ghost	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	16	13	7
Lich	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19	16	10
Special	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20	19	13

Optional: If two or more clerics simultaneously turn the same types of undead in the same group there will be some overlap. Subtract 1-4 from total turned/destroyed if two clerics' attempts overlap. If three clerics, subtract 1-6; if four, 1-8; if five, 1-10; if six or more 1-12. For tournament purposes, the clerics will not overlap.

Casting *Fireballs* into the mausoleums: The mausoleums each have a volume of 24,000 cubic feet (60×40×10), so there will be some degree of "blow back," depending on the target point of the **Fireball** within the mausoleum.

Anyone standing within the area takes damage from the **Fireball.** If the entire mausoleum is not filled by the **Fireball**, a number of undead proportionate to the percentage of the area not affected will escape its effects. For example, if there are 24 skeletons and 12 ghouls inside and only half the mausoleum is affected by a **Fireball**, then 12 skeletons and 6 ghouls will be unaffected.

The doors cannot be held closed after the **Fireball** (spell or missile) has been cast inside; anyone attempting to do so will be hurled backwards six squares by the force of the blast, parallel to the walls of the tomb area, taking 1-6 points of damage and possibly (greater than dexterity on 1d20) falling into a ghoul pit.

The Bloody Bones

The scenario features a new monster: the **Bloody Bones**. This evil team consists of a "master" that cannot leave its lair and telepathically linked "minions" that are highly mobile. For the most part, the minions will stay in the secondary mausoleums and only marshal their forces against those who directly disturb them. They will flee the round after they are wounded in melee, provided their undead forces have been largely neutralized. The master will redistribute them such that each mausoleum has at least two. The excess will return to room 10 for two turns, then be dispatched back to their mausoleums to rally any remaining undead. The master will not risk any of them unnecessarily, and will try to defeat the party with lesser undead if possible. In no case should the DM set up a mass assault on the party from all quarters in a tournament situation.

Tournament Undead Turns

Hordes of undead must be dealt with in this adventure, but the success or failure of a team could easily hinge on one "turn undead"

die roll. As this will do little to measure skill, the following tables will be used for the tournament. They take into account the evilness of the area as well as the strength of the **Master Bloody Bones** and its minions:

Effect of Evil Area plus Master and 5 or 6 minions

	Level of Cleric					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Skeleton	—	—	2	4	4	4D
Zombie	—	—	—	2	2	4D
Ghoul	—	—	—	1	2	2
Wight	—	—	—	—	—	1
Ghast	—	—	—	—	—	—

Effect of Evil Area plus Master and 3 or 4 minions

	Level of Cleric					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Skeleton	—	—	2	4	4	6D
Zombie	—	—	—	2	4	4D
Ghoul	—	—	—	2	3	3
Wight	—	—	—	—	—	2
Ghast	—	—	—	—	—	—

Effect of Evil Area plus Master and 1 or 2 minions

	Level of Cleric					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Skeleton	—	—	2	4	4	6D
Zombie	—	—	—	2	4	4D
Ghoul	—	—	—	2	2	4
Wight	—	—	—	—	—	2
Ghast	—	—	—	—	—	—

Effect of Evil Area Only, or Area plus Master

	Level of Cleric					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Skeleton	—	2	4	4	6	6D
Zombie	—	—	2	4	4	6D
Ghoul	—	—	—	2	4	4
Wight	—	—	—	—	2	2
Ghast	—	—	—	—	—	2

The tables indicate the effectiveness of clerics up to 6th level, against types as well as numbers turned or disintegrated (D), relative to the strength of the negative influence of the area itself and the number of minions. In play, all the cleric(s) need do is state he is attempting to turn. The DM consults the table appropriate to the prevailing situation and turns (or disintegrates) the indicated numbers. If more than one cleric is operating, add the results of the turning attempts: e.g., a 4th and a 6th level cleric turning undead on the last table would turn 6 skeletons, 6 zombies, 3 ghouls, 1 wight and no ghasts.

If undead of the affected types are still present at the start of the next round, the cleric(s) may make successive attempts each round. In an enclosed area that the undead cannot actually leave (like the mausoleums), they will move as far away from the cleric(s) as possible. If subsequently meleed by the characters, they will defend themselves.

The Outer Door

The wards are easily removed by reading the Incants of Ishcabebble. As their power fades, a design appears in fine, silvery lines on the stone that seals the tomb; give the players **Players' Handout 1**.

The players must use the nine keys in the proper order to unlock the door. Starting at the bottom hole and working along the hypotenuse of the inverted triangle (fin), a gold key is inserted in the first hole and turned clockwise once. The hole and the key disappear. The second gold key is put in the fourth hole and turned clockwise four times, and the third gold key is inserted into the seventh hole and turned seven times. Then an iron key is placed in the second hole and turned twice, another in the fifth hole and turned five times, etc. If multiple turns are required, each turn will produce a loud click, with the key and hole disappearing on the last turn.

Each time the procedure is correctly followed (correct key in the order, correct hole, correct number of turns), the holes and the key used disappear. On keys requiring more than one turn (all but the first), none of the holes disappear until the final turn. If the correct key in the order is inserted but not turned, any other key inserted, even if the next one in the order, will result in an electrical shock.

If the players perform any of the actions incorrectly, the person handling the key receives 4 points of electrical damage. The keys may only be turned by hand.

The doors open into a 20 foot wide corridor. Daylight flooding into the corridor reveals the west wall, defaced by a crude mural depicting Llywelyn and another kingly figure joined by a white smear. On the east wall, near large double doors at the corridor's end 50 feet away, lies the rubble of a broken statue, apparently toppled from a carved granite throne. In its place sprawls a crude caricature of a man, stuffed with straw, robed in chintz, and crowned with a paper coronet.

These are clues for the party that perhaps Llywelyn was not liked by everyone. The other figure in the mural and the straw king represent Grellyn, the totally unknown co-ruler during Llywelyn's reign. Grellyn will be fully explained in the final scenario. The doors open easily into the tomb proper.

There is no illumination in this area, so pay close attention when describing what the party can see, considering how large an area can be illuminated with torches or various light spells. A character should fall into the first pit when the party approaches reasonably near it. Thereafter the DM should allow characters to fall into the pits whenever they approach them if they do not take precautions against these traps. Note that something as simple as a **Detect Magic** spell will locate the pits. Also see area 5 when the characters come within the circle of activation for the golems.

Ghoul Pits: The circles on the map denote ghoul pits, each 8 feet across and 10 feet deep, and containing two ghouls (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 9, 9; #AT 3; THACO 16; D 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**). These pits are covered by an illusory floor indistinguishable from the rest of the stone paving, though a **Detect Magic** or **Detect Illusion** will reveal the pits, and once broken by physical touch the coverings are gone. For tournament purposes, when the characters near their first pit, one character from the front rank will fall in, unless suitable precautions are being taken. Only drop the characters into additional pits if they fail to take adequate precautions. Such a fall causes 1-6 points of damage and puts the character right next to 2 ghouls.

The Tunnels: The dotted lines connecting the pits are an underground tunnel network, the tunnels being five feet wide and six feet high. If the characters make a major effort through the tunnels, the ghouls under each pit will move towards them at their full movement rate. The **Master Bloody Bones** will summon four ghasts (one

:m each mausoleum) into the pits as well. Movement and combat ust be in single file. (Note: Weapons requiring a space of more an five feet cannot be used in the tunnels, but no tournament aracters have such weapons).

THE MAUSOLEUMS

he mausoleums are similarly constructed. There are ten foot high uble doors opening outward, each panel being five feet wide. hus the opening is ten feet wide when both are opened. Inside are o rows of six carved stone platforms, each supporting the rouded remains of the dead. These platforms are hollow, and may opened by shifting the stone slab upon which the dead lie. Each ausoleum is that of a different family, all important to King Llywe- n during his reign.

ach is occupied by a large group of mixed undead, as well as min- ns of the **Master Bloody Bones**. The undead are milling randomly sout the area, but the minions are placed specifically on indicated atforms in each area. Certain platforms contain treasure and mag- al items, but one of the Bloody Bones in two of the mausoleums is anding atop an item that will prove very helpful to the party. While e undead will move to melee, the minions will stay stationary, even meleed.

4 skeletons: (AC 7; MV 12"; HD 1; hp 5 each; #AT 1; THACO); D 1-6; SD half damage from edged weapons, immune to **Sleep**, **harm**, and cold-based spells).

4 zombies: (AC 8; MV 6"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 1; THACO 16; 1-8).

3 ghouls: (AC 6; MV 9"; HD 2; hp 9 each; #AT 3; THACO 16; 1-3/1-3/1-6; SA paralyzation; SD immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**).

wights: (AC 5; MV 12"; HD 4+3; hp 16, 21, 24; #AT 1; THACO 15; D 1-4; SA energy drain; SD immune to **Sleep**, **Charm**, and cold-based spells, need magic or silver weapons to hit).

3 ghasts: (AC 4; MV 15"; HD 4; hp 15, 18, 25; #AT 3; THACO 15; D 1-4/1-4/1-8; SA save vs. Poison or attack at -2, paralyzation; SD immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**).

The undead will move to attack when the doors are opened. There is no surprise for them or the party under any circumstances. Two ghasts and two wights will be up front. The second rank is composed of the remaining ghast and wight and ghouls. The skeletons and zombies are milling behind them, and occasionally a few will work themselves to the front, just for variety. When a ghast or wight is slain, the one in the second rank will step in to take its place.

Turned undead will move to the back of the mausoleum, but the minions must be meleed to remove them as they are unaffected by turning attempts.

Key to the Tomb

1. Mausoleum of Clan Morinal

Morinal was Baron of Morganth, a forested area of Pellham now totally felled and cleared for farm land. In this area are the standard undead and two **Bloody Bones Minions** (AC 4; MV 12"; HD 3; hp 24 each; #AT 1; THACO 16; D 1-6; edged weapons do half damage, immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**; MR 5%), one atop platform #4 and the other on platform #7.

Platforms #1, #3, #4, #5, #9, #10, #11 and #12 are empty. Platform #2 contains 6,000 sp and a **Battle Axe +2**, #6 a jeweled chalice worth 1,000 gp, #7 an alabaster wand that will deactivate the southernmost stone golem (see 5), and #8 a quiver of 6 **Arrows +3**.

2. Mausolem of Clan Taravol

Lord Taravol was Baron of Cameland, a southern province of Pellham lost to neighboring Forland in the Battle of Camden's Ditch during the reign of King Damocles. The undead occupants are the same as in mausoleum 1, and a **Bloody Bones Minion** stands on platform #8.

Platforms #1, #2, #3, #6, #7, #9, #10, and #11 are empty. Platform #4 contains two necklaces worth 500 gp each, #5 a bejeweled sword scabbard worth 600 gp, #8 a **Long Sword +2**, and #12 a coffer containing 50 pieces of electrum.

3. Mausoleum of Clan Rupp

Sir Rupp the Merciful was Llywelyn's Earl of the Eastern Marches. The family had a distant relationship to the royal line and was subsequently exterminated during the reign of Rotkoddam the Strong to prevent any claim to the throne by the Rupps. The undead mix is the same as in mausoleum 1, and there is one minion standing on platform #6.

All platforms but #10 are empty, and it contains 1,000 gold pieces and a **Footman's Mace +2**.

4. Mausoleum of Clan Gisteng

Lord Gisteng was Earl of the Lakes, the northern province of Pellham. The undead mix is the same as mausoleum 1, and there are two minions here, one on platform #6 and the other on #9.

Platforms #3, #4, #5, #7, #8, 10, #11 and #12 are empty. Platform #1 contains a **Broad Sword +3**, #2 a set of armbands worth 200 gp, #6 an alabaster wand that will deactivate the northernmost stone golem (see 5), #9 a cask of 1,500 gold pieces and a **Footman's Flail +2**.

The Central Mausoleum (Area 5).

5. Central Mausoleum

Read the following when someone faces the east end of the central mausoleum.

> This end of the enclosed building is 40 feet wide. On either end is a heavy metal gate. Standing in front of each gate is a stone statue. Behind each gate, a stairway leading down can be faintly seen. On the wall between the two is a carving of a skeleton, clad in a cowled robe and holding a wand in its left hand, standing at the base of a cylinder.

This stone building reaches to the ceiling (20 feet high). It houses the staircases that descend to the second level. The carving is of the **Master Bloody Bones** standing at the bottom of the pit. The carving is to scale, so if the players have seen a minion and know how deep the pits are, they can determine that this skeleton is larger. The party must get by the golems in order to descend to the second level.

Two stone golems (AC 5; MV 6"; HD 14; hp 60 each; #AT 1; THACO 8; D 3d8; SA cast **Slow** spell every other round; SD +2 or better weapons to hit, immune to all spells except **Transmute Rock to Mud** [and its reverse] and **Stone to Flesh**) guard the locked gates, one standing immediately before each. The dashed circles demarcate the area within which the golems move. Any character stepping over the boundary will cause the nearest golem to move toward him. The golems will not cross the boundary, and if someone attempts to slip behind him and open the gate, the golem will turn and move to attack him. When all characters have left the marked area, the activated golem will return to its original station.

The gates are heavy steel that cannot be bent, and the locks are pickproof and buried deep within the stone such that damaging spells will do them no harm. The key to opening the lock is the right hand from the stone golem guarding that particular gate. The gates are triple locked — if a **knock** spell is cast upon one, its golem will move to it and relock it. An examination of the gate will reveal a hole that is flat on the lower edge with five rounded ridges on the upper edge. It fits the proper golem's right hand.

An iron golem (AC 3, MV 6"; HD 18; hp 80; #AT 1; THACO 7; D 4d10; SA breath poison gas every seven rounds; SD need +3 or better weapons to hit, magical fire repairs damage) is hidden behind a secret door between the two stone golems. **For tournament purposes this door is undetectable by the characters.** It appears when the stone golem guarding either gate is destroyed or deactivated with a wand. It will not leave the bounded area. The carving on the wall is the party's clue to look in the pits for the deactivation wand for the iron golem.

Deactivating the golems: The golems may be deactivated with the wands in areas 1, 4, and 10. The wand must be pointed at the golem and the command word spoken. The command word is inscribed on the wand itself. The golem may be reactivated the same way, by pointing the wand and speaking the command word. The actions and orders of the golems may not be changed, they may only be turned on or off. Note that using the wrong wand on a golem has no effect.

The Sarcophagi (Areas 6-9)

6. Sarcophagus of Lord Morinal

Lying supine atop this stone box is a metal statue of a fighter clad in chain mail and armed with a two-handed sword. The end of the box facing the center of the room is enscripted in common tongue "Lord Morinal, Baron of Morganth."

The stone lid may be shifted aside to reveal the coffin inside. Noth-

ing of value lies within the sarcophagus. The statue is magical, in that it can be animated by a phylactery found in area 10.

7. Sarcophagus of Lord Rupp

Lying on this stone box is the metal statue of a fighter armed with a military pick. The inscription reads "Lord Rupp, Earl of the Eastern Marches and Loyal Vassal of Llywelyn the Just." This statue may also be activated with a phylactery from room 10.

8. Sarcophagus of Lady Arian

The statue on this stone sarcophagus is of a comely female, unarmed. The inscription on the end of the sarcophagus reads "Lady Arian, Great-Granddaughter of Suradel and Beloved Wife of Lord Rupp." Her statue may be activated by a phylactery from room 10 as well.

The coffin rests upon a false bottom of the sarcophagus, which can be easily located if checked for. Removing this bottom reveals a tunnel by which the ghoul pits or room 10 can be entered.

9. Sarcophagus of Lord Gisteng

The statue is armed with a battle axe, and the inscription says "Lord Gisteng, Earl of the Lakes and Son-in-law of Llywelyn." Interred with the coffin is a hardened leather case that contains eight crystal cups, valued at 10,000gp. As with the previous three statues, this one may be activated as well.

The Lair of the Master (Area 10)

10. Lair of the Master Bloody Bones

This area can only be reached through the tunnel network. The ceiling is 15 feet high, and the **Master Bloody Bones** (AC 2; MV 12"; HD special; hp special; #AT 1; D 2d6; SD immune to **Sleep** and **Charm**, edged weapons do half damage; MR 10%) sits upon an ancient wooden throne. Its hit dice and hit points must be determined according to the prevailing condition of his minions:

Number of Minions	Master's Hit Dice	Master's Hit Points	Minions
0	5	30	two in mausoleum 1
1	6	38	one in mausoleum 2
2	7	46	
3	8	54	one in mausoleum 3
4	9	62	
5	10	70	two in mausoleum 4
6	11	78	

The master cannot leave this room, but will certainly fight. It will summon all the remaining ghasts (and possibly some minions as well). Beneath the seat of the throne is a compartment that contains a leather pouch, protected by a **Glyph of Warding**. If detected, either cleric may identify the glyph as one causing electrical damage. The glyph may be bypassed by uttering the name of the glyph (assume this knowledge for tournament play), or removed with a **Dispel**. If not bypassed, anyone touching the pouch will take 24 points of electrical damage (save vs. Spell for half damage). Inside the pouch is an iron wand that will deactivate the iron golem (see 5), and four parchment strips. The writing on the strips is magical, except for one word in the common tongue on each; Morinal, Rupp, Arian, and Gisteng.

The parchment strips are phylacteries that will animate the statues lying on the sarcophagi in the main tomb area. This is done by simply tying the appropriate parchment to the right wrist of the statue. The names must match, of course; or nothing will happen. A **Read Magic** spell will reveal the proper procedures.

All the animated statues are immune to paralyzation and energy draining (ideal for fighting undead), poison, and all types of fire attacks. Once activated, each statue (except Arian) will follow the party's directions; Arian will follow directions only if it suits her purpose. If ordered into the ghoul pits they will fall and be ruined. If sent into combat with golems, a "to hit" score of 14 for a stone golem or 12 or the iron golem will irrevocably batter the statue into uselessness.

Morinal: (AC 1; MV 6"; HD 6; hp 25; #AT 3/2; THACO 12; D 1-10+2 (vs. man-size) or 3d6 (vs. large). Fights as a 9th level fighter.

Rupp: (AC 1; MV 6"; HD 6; hp 25; #AT 3/2; THACO 14; D 1-6+3 (vs. man-size) or 2d4+2 (vs. large). Fights as an 8th level fighter.

Arian: (AC 1; MV 6"; HD 6; hp25; #AT 1; THACO 19; D 1-4 (dagger). Fights as a 9th level magic-user.

First level: **Affect Normal Fires, Light, Push, Shocking Grasp**.

Second level: **Darkness 15' Radius, Stinking Cloud, Web**.

Third level: **Fireball, Hold Person, Slow**.

Fourth level: **Dimension Door, Minor Globe of Invulnerability**.

Fifth level: **Transmute Mud to Rock**.

This statue will become a sorceress. She will use her spells to the detriment of the party, if activated (remember, she's the great-granddaughter of Suradel the Witchking). Her powers will be best used if the party combats the golems, such as **Light** cast into a fighter's eyes to blind him and reduce his chance to hit, **Push** to cause someone to stumble and fall, thus reducing his armor class, **Web** to incapacitate someone, thus giving the golems an easy target, **Hold** or **Slow** on a character, **Fireball** into melee to heal the iron golem while simultaneously damaging the party, **Transmute Mud to Rock** to heal a stone golem of all damage sustained, etc. She will attempt to make her spell casting not obvious, preferring to remain motionless in the background, hoping that the party will think her useless and forget about her. If the opportunity presents itself to seriously hamper the party through a series of spells, she will cast **Minor Globe of Invulnerability** first to protect herself.

MODULE CREDITS

Design: Bob Blake

Development: Bob Blake

Editing: Jon Pickens and Frank Mentzer

Cover, illustrations, and maps: Roger Raupp

Production: Mary Kirchoff and Marilyn Favaro

Special thanks to: Dave Griggs, Dan Lawrence, Martin Newhard, Terry Primrose, Jim Ronco, Tom Sievers and Rex Zinn

BLOODY BONES

Master Bloody Bones

Frequency: *Rare*
No. Appearing: *1*
Armor Class: *2*
Move: *12"*
Hit Dice: *5-11*
% in Lair: *100%*
Treasure Type: *Nil*
No. of Attacks: *1*
Damage/Attack: *2-12*
Special Attacks: *Nil*
Special Defenses: *See below*
Magic Resistance: *10%*
Intelligence: *Very*
Alignment: *Lawful evil*
Size: *L (8')*
Level/X.P. Value: *VI/330 +6/hit point to VIII/2,850 +16/hit point*

Bloody Bones Minion

Frequency: *Rare*
No. Appearing: *1-6*
Armor Class: *4*
Move: *12"*
Hit Dice: *3*
% in Lair: *100%*
Treasure Type: *Nil*
No. of Attacks: *1*
Damage/Attack: *1-6*
Special Attacks: *Nil*
Special Defenses: *See below*
Magic Resistance: *5%*
Intelligence: *Normal*
Alignment: *Lawful evil*
Size: *M (5'-6')*
Level/X.P. Value: *IV/125 +4/hit point*

Bloody bones are summoned by evil clerics from the Nine Hells to aid in the protection of evil shrines from the depredations of good clerics. The summoning results in the appearance of a master and 1-6 minions. The master has the ability to draw all undead of lesser hit dice within a 20 mile radius to its service. Once installed in an evil area, the Bloody Bones exert influence on any undead therein, resulting in a negative modifier applied to any good cleric's attempt to turn undead. This modifier is additive with any other penalty for the evil shrine or temple. The strength of this effect and the master's hit dice are dependent on the number of minions:

Number of Minions	Turn Undead Modifier	Bonus to Master's HD
0	-2	0
1	-3	+1
2	-3	+2
3	-4	+3
4	-4	+4
5	-5	+5
6	-5	+6

In addition to the modifier, the number of undead turned or disintegrated, if any, is reduced by 1-4 (though a successful attempt *always* affects at least one monster).

Control of undead can be maintained by the master itself or any of its minions. Only one need be in the presence of the undead being controlled for the modifier to be applied. If none are in the same (line-of-sight) area as the undead, "turn" attempts may be made normally. A telepathic link with its minions allows the master to send a minion where it is needed. The minions may effectively **Dimension Door** at will up to 24" range to move within the area, but the master must remain in the place to which it was originally summoned.

The master loses hit dice and hit points when its minions are slain, equal to one hit die and one third the hit points of the minion. Thus, an 11 hit die master who loses a minion of 24 hit points will immediately become a 10 die monster and lose eight hit points. If the master is slain, any surviving minions are **Gated** back to the Nine Hells. Note that reductions due to loss of minions are taken against the master's *original* hit points. For example, an 11 HD master reduced from 70 to 40 points while its minions are elsewhere will lose *no* hit points until hit point losses from destroyed minions exceed 30. It *will* lose hit dice as the minions are destroyed, however, but not hit points.

These monsters are skeletal, and thus edged weapons inflict half damage upon them.

Description: Bloody Bones appear as human skeletons clad in fine textured, heavy robes of a black, charcoal grey or dark brown color. The bones are a deep red from the blood that flows through them. The eye sockets are jet black, but Bloody Bones are capable of sight.

The Lineage of Kings

I sing for you now of the lineage of kings,
Of Pellham's mighty and doddering
Fools that japed and when all were done
Proved worthless at best, all save one.

Alendus Crebus, first of the kings,
First of nine by his conquerings.
Circus the Hearty, lover of ale,
Son of Crebus, he drinks in death still.

Fenton the Foolish, mourn well-named,
Glutton of mutton, third fool of the famed.
Hemwell the Haughty, brother of Circus,
The fourth he became by the slaying of Fenton.

Pelcolb the Pious, bastard of Fenton,
Builder of the Temple, fifth one in.
Voltar the Victorious, paver of Kingsway,
Grandson of Crebus, so they all say.

Roybermo the Bloody, bastard of Voltar,
Grim destroyer of clansmen, seventh so far.
Toenum the Terrible, tormentor of souls,
Grim as his father, eight bake in the coals.

Lascron the Last, ninth of nine,
Father to no man, last of the line.
Karnac the Cairnlord, usurper malignerd,
Lascron's cousin, mover of the nine.

Agneus Expander, true lover of horses,
Sibling of Karnac, the nine were of course his.
Loring the Lost, foul slayer of eight,
Third of the kings, but victim of fate.

Loring the Lost, known for his songs,
Plays minstrel to demons, as cursed by his wrongs.
Marcus the Marshall, of this line is fourth,
Four stones mark his cairn, pink ones, of course.

Sutadel the Scholar, first of the Witchkings,
Son of the bard and prophet of many things.
Argunth Elf-friend, of this line is sixth,
Feared slayer of orc hosts who rose trifled with.

Rikar the Roarer, seventh of seven,
Slain young in battle, first one to heaven.
Lightmal the Dark, first of his line,
Cousin of Rikar, awake for all time.

Dalemial the Light, Black Lightmal's spawn,
Cursed by his father, he's withered and gone.
Llywelyn the Just, slain at his dinner,
Gem of all kings, he was no sinner.

Logar the Loved, a shepherd in youth,
Llywelyn's son grew ancient in truth.
Damocles the Wizard, grandson of Llywelyn,
Second of the Witchkings. Time was the villain.

Rotkoldam the Strong, sixth of the line,
Led his troops into battle, led from behind.
Claudius the Cautious, Rot's son and heir,
Died in his sleep, though none seemed to care.

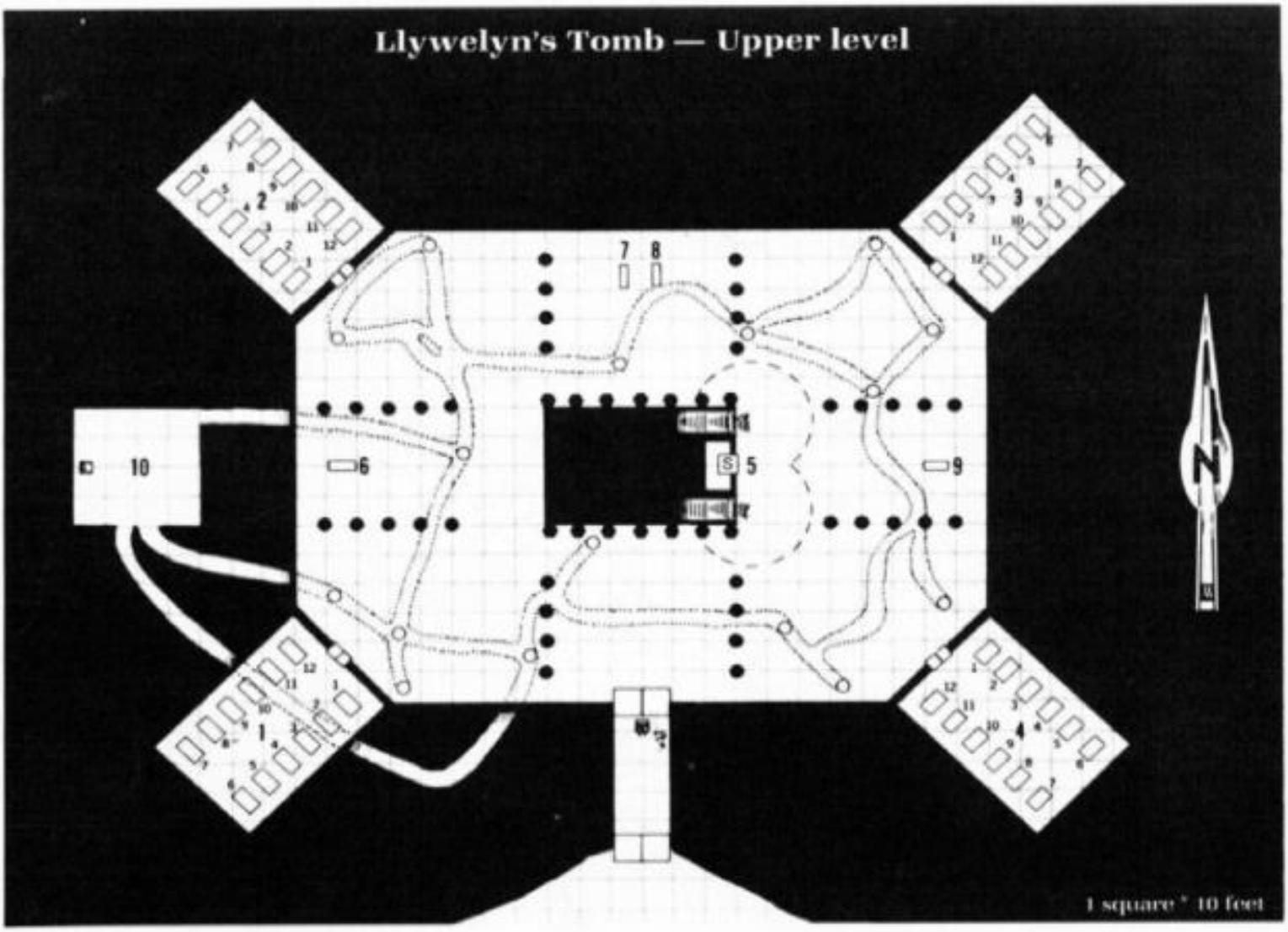
Dacquiri the Witchking, eighth of nine,
Slew Ishcabeble, died the same time.
Kolin the Quick, first of the four,
Fought without weapons, died at the door.

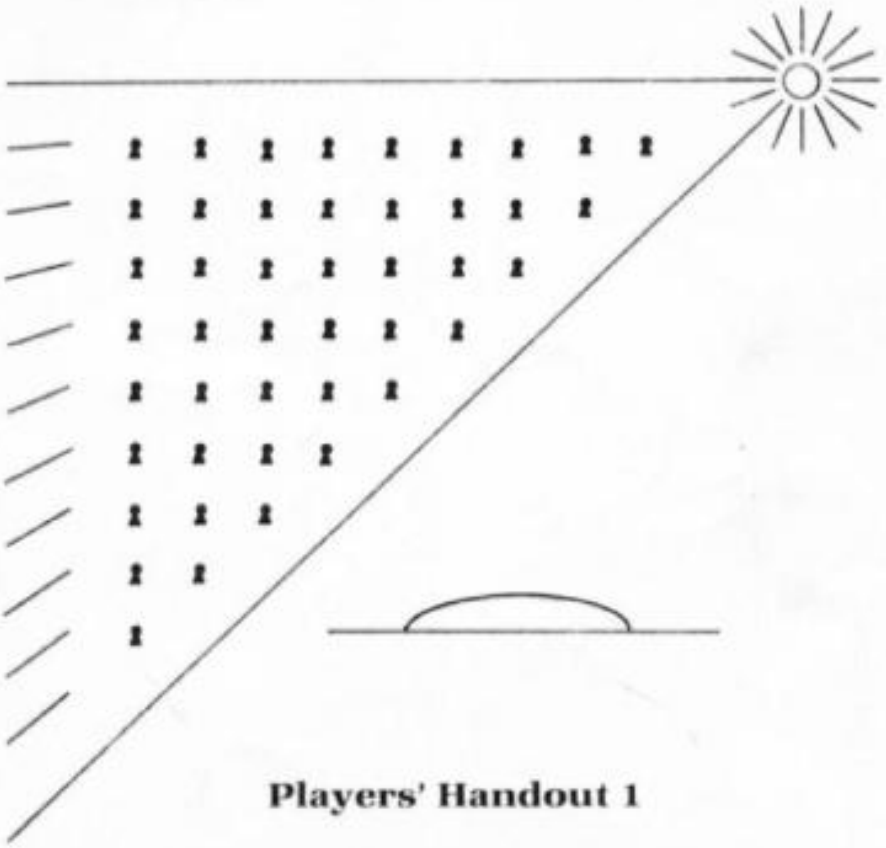
Cemor the Valiant, kept up the bard's quest,
Tried as he might, but finished second best.
Dwarven Blaine Shortshanks for Cemor went on,
Third quester and king was merely Time's pawn.

Alendus the Second, rogue liar and cheat,
The kingdom he destroyed lies at our feet.
Two hundred years have passed us hence,
And foolish rhymes sometimes make sense.

That is the lineage of Pellham's kings,
Fools, knaves and charlatans, blackguards and thieves.
But the price of the telling's an awful demand,
Hark to the wage the fiddler commands!

For now it is finished, my song is complete,
Your binding has ended, but you must be fleet,
For the third time you hear the name of me,
The third time is when they will come for thee.





Players' Handout 1

THE MAGIC-USER

by James M. Ward

Everyone has a favorite character class in the role-playing game they play most often. This column exists to give a general idea of what characteristics and/or quirks a superior, balanced character in a particular character class would have. These "archetypical" characters are designed to act as benchmarks for your own characters; they are only subjective guidelines.

Keep in mind, however, that if all, or even most, of the characters in your campaign are like those presented in this column, perhaps too much is being given away. This, the second article in the series, details the archetypical magic-user.

Persona

Delsenora is a 56 year old wizardress who has taken Longevity potions to make her physical age 22. She is a precise, aloof, and imaginative sort of person.

Delsenora is dedicated to her magical craft and spends a great deal of time looking for magical artifacts of all types. Her mother was a magic-user of great power who gave Delsenora her spell books when she retired. After spending years learning the power of the books, Delsenora quested for several magic items that her mother knew about but never acquired. Along the way she picked up several different types of items that have served her well in her adventures.

Her quests have caused her to travel in the lands of the giants, in the process learning both how to be useful to them and their languages. As a neutral character, she has been advisor to many important fire and frost giant chieftains who have in turn pledged to help her in time of need.

She often takes young giants under her wing to serve as helpers. These man-sized youngsters are trained to deal with humans, and given knowledge of other giant races. In exchange she is given military service on her explorations in the wilds. She has the reputation of being very fair in her payments to underlings, but the dangerous areas she frequents often eliminates her help before their term of employment is up.

As can be seen in this illustration, Delsenora looks much younger than her actual 56 years. She is shown here enroute to her keep.

Although Delsenora remains neutral in her dealings with most beings, she greatly fears all undead creatures. She has had several bad experiences with vampires while exploring old temples. Several times in her career she has organized bands of clerics to destroy temples and holdings controlled by liches and vampires. In these battles she has done her utmost to get rid of the undead menaces. These campaigns have resulted in several important magical finds for her, but she has always refused the gold and other types of treasure, feeling they were cursed.

Delsenora's one great passion in life is flying, a pursuit which has colored all of her activities. Her first reaction to any adverse encounter is to utter a *Flying* spell and take to the air to drop darts on her attackers. If her *Flying* spells are used up she will *Levitate*.

This passion for flying has caused her to build a small tower keep in a secluded spot in the Crystalmist Mountains between the Dry Steppes and the

Perched high in an inaccessible mountain, Delsenora's keep is filled with magical traps and defenses. The interior is divided into two parts: one holds guests, and the other is where she lives and works.

Hornwood Forests.

The other interest that occupies her time is the study of ancient ruins. Delsenora has a large collection of old maps and temple plans. This interest in ruins has caused her to adventure very far from home; some of these temples have given her her favorite magic items.

Skills

She speaks fluent cloud giant, fire giant, frost giant, hill giant, storm giant, red dragon, and unicorn. She is very skilled in identifying unknown magical items of all types, and has been highly paid for such work. Her favorite tricks are all magical. She has several unusual spells that her mother gave her which she has improved upon. These include: 4th-level *Hold Giant* spell (1-4 of them take a -3 on their saves or are held); 3rd-level *Displacement* spell (as the cloak for seven melee rounds); 3rd-level *Cold Ray* (as the *Cone of Cold* but a single beam); 2nd-level *Summon Cat* spell (will teleport the two largest cats within 20 miles to fight for her for one round); 1st-level *Regenerate* spell (as the best ring for 12 hours).

Besides the unusual spells she has an extremely unusual familiar: a large male unicorn. It was summoned when Delsenora used a scroll spell of *Find Familiars* given to her by a cloud giant. The giant told her she would receive the familiar she needed to help her on her quests — the unicorn. The creature is a powerful tempering force in her life and one of the reasons why she rarely, if ever, goes into underground areas to adventure. Everytime she strays from the path of true neutrality, her familiar presents advice that tempers Delsenora's judgement. She has learned to always trust the unicorn's advice.

Equipment

Delsenora possesses the following magic items: A belt *Pouch of Holding*, which holds what a *Portable Hole* would but it magically shrinks objects to make them fit (does not work on living or animated objects); a *Ring of Free Action*; a *Rope of Entanglement*; and a *Dagger of Venom* (she only uses it on monsters and enemies).

Besides the magic items already listed, Delsenora has the following in her pouch: four-foot iron pole, ten 10,000gp gems, ten *Magic Mouth* spells cast on smooth rocks that shout threats in a number of giant languages when someone passes over them. She is fond of throwing them down corridors to slow down enemies when she is chased. She has three small, valuable-looking pouches filled with rocks which each have a *Fire Trap* spell on them. When being chased by intelligent monsters she will purposely drop these pouches expecting her enemies to see them, pick them up and spring the *Fire Trap* spell.

In addition to these items, she also packs the normal amount of adventuring equipment in her pouch: food, water/wine, clothes, camping equipment, etc.

Holdings and possessions

Her tower keep is perched high in an extremely inaccessible mountain. Even the tallest of giants have to fly to get there. It was built by magic and is filled with magical traps and defenses. It is designed in two parts. There are a set of chambers equipped for giants to live in. These areas are usually always filled with guests that have come for advise. The second part is where she lives and works; it is carefully guarded by invisible stalkers, special magical spells, and several holy words she paid to have placed in her keep. Her personal treasure horde, only to be used in times of dire necessity, includes: *Staff of Power* (12 charges), *Wand of Negation* (3 charges), *Wand of Lightning* (9 charges), and a *Broom of Flying*. She wants to recharge the wands and the staff but is very busy with her other interests and has not taken the time to do it yet.

TWO NEW NPCS

ARGRAMUND OF THE ROCK

ARMOR CLASS: *7*
MOVE: *12"*
HIT POINTS: *36*
NO. OF ATTACKS: *1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type (+2)*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Spells*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Magic devices*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
SIZE: *M (6' tall)*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful neutral*
MAGIC-USER: *7th level*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *166*
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: *D,E/F,G,I*
S: 18 (+1,+2) I: 17 W: 13 D: 15
C: 16 CH: 14

Argramund is one of several lawful adventurers who took over a previously chaotic fortress and renamed it "The Rock." Using the fortress as their base of operations, these adventurers have made numerous raids against chaos and those who support it, particularly against chaotic-evil enclaves. None of the adventurers will discuss their "set up" at The Rock, or future expeditions.

A powerfully-built man, Argramund travels through surrounding lands wearing a black cloak and carrying a huge gnarled staff. His craggy face, rough black beard, and piercing dark eyes make him an imposing figure; few people bother him and this seems to suit him well. His staff is known to be magical (though no one knows it is a *Staff of Power*, fully charged), and he uses it well in combat. He carries no other weapons.

An inventive spellcaster, Argramund has developed variations of some common spells and carries them with him. He has a variant *Monster Summoning I* spell that will bring 2-8 monodrone modrons to assist him, and is working out plans for a variant *Monster Summoning II* spell that will summon 1-6 duodrone modrons. All spells are as per the *Players Handbook*.

Argramund is currently searching for a lawful sword, *Sunlight*, that was stolen by a slaad some months ago. He is looking for adventurers to accompany him on an expedition to the slaad's lair in some nearby hills, but will not immediately tell those he travels with what exactly he is searching for, unless they identify themselves as being of his alignment. *Sunlight* was made by Argramund's old magic tutor, who was slain by the slaad thief. Argramund suspects the slaad is a green one and thus quite dangerous.

Though he tends to be abrupt and secretive, Argramund is quite charismatic. He says little or nothing about his own life yet seems to know much about everyone else (through careful use of his three psionic talents: *Clairvoyance, ESP,* and *Object Reading*). He would rather not be the leader of an expedition; however, he freely lends his support and advice, thus indirectly manipulating the party's decisions.

Created by Susan Lawson

LIDABMOB THE WIZARD

AC: *7*
MOVE: *12"*
HIT POINTS: *69*
NO. of ATTACKS: *1*
DAMAGE/ATTACK: *By weapon type*
SPECIAL ATTACKS: *Spells*
SPECIAL DEFENSES: *Magic devices*
MAGIC RESISTANCE: *Standard*
SIZE: *M (5'10" tall)*
ALIGNMENT: *Lawful evil*
MAGIC-USER: *14th level*
PSIONIC ABILITY: *None*
ATTACK/DEFENSE MODES: *None*
S: 10 I: 18 W: 18 D: 18 C: 18 CH: 18

Lidabmob was a magic-user of the Wild Coast region who grew in power while exploring the ruins of Greyhawk castle, and has seen many strange and unusual things in those old ruins. With the help of a large band of fellow adventurers he fought and defeated many fierce creatures in the dungeon therein. He won against vampires and liches, demons and devils, wizards like himself, and clever traps that took the lives of many before him.

A thin man with a brash nature, Lidabmob has a passion for magic items of all types. In his years of adventuring he has gone through fifteen different fully charged wands, a *Staff of Power*, and several hundred potions. At his career peak he had a castle on a river near Greyhawk with hundreds of men at arms and knights to serve him. These included a high level fighter, an elf magic-user/fighter, several elf fighters, and one very powerful dwarf fighter.

At one point he was forced to deal with devils to save his life and the lives of several of his followers. This act caused him to lose almost everything he had, including his castle and lands, to a pit fiend. Now he roams the Wild Coast with a loyal dwarf.

He has his magical books stored away in a special magic box that performs like a *Bag of Holding*. He wears a *Ring of Regeneration* and a *+3 Ring of Protection*. He has several useful *Protection* scrolls, an Ebony Fly, a *Paralyzation* wand, and a supply of potions.

His only goal at present is to get out from under the evil forces that have brought him to his current situation.

Created by James. M. Ward

POLYHEDRON™ Newszine wants *your* characters! Send in a couple of your favorite regulation characters in the format used above and we'll try to print them. We're looking for balanced characters with short but complete descriptions (so we can print as many as possible). We can't return them or evaluate all of them, so keep copies. Mail your typed or legibly-written character sketches soon, and maybe you'll see them in the next issue of POLYHEDRON Newszine!

Two Cents

by Joseph Wichman

I have read the "Two Cents" column in POLYHEDRON™ Newszine #14, and feel that I must comment. Although the column is well written and its arguments have some merit, I disagree with the basic premise concerning "role playing." I played in a campaign where the Dungeon Master enforced what he called "role playing," and I was quickly disillusioned. It was no fun having the Dungeon Master tell the players how their characters should act based on the Dungeon Master's view of the character's "personality." On the other hand, too many times have I heard the player's excuse, "But that's what my character would do in that situation." After the third time a character foolishly causes the death of others in the party, or after the first time a character assassinates another, one or more players may be lost to the delightful world of role playing.

An actor in a play spends months of concentration and rehearsal to perfect a character that he must play for a couple of hours (and in a play the dialogue and actions are scripted). Role-playing gamers cannot be expected to do this, and the analogy, although commonly used and usually accepted, is fallacious. A player should use his characters to express aspects of his personality that are difficult to express in his everyday life. The AD&D® game gives people the chance to be a barbarian of immense strength and few words, another the chance to be very pious, even fanatical, in the worship of a fantasy deity. In fact, it gives a person the chance to be both characters if he so chooses. The important point is that these are not, and cannot, be personalities totally divorced from the real personality of the player. They are, instead, free expressions of aspects of a person's self. The wonder of the game is that it gives free reign to the players' fantasies. It is a game to enjoy, and each character is a carefully nurtured portion of his player's personality and fantasy life.

The AD&D game (or any game, for that matter) should be a game of cooperation. If a character refuses to cooperate with his fellows, it is the player who is refusing to cooperate. If a thief character steals a cherished or important item from a companion, he deserves to be ostracized by the other characters. And if a player's characters continually behave in such a non-cooperative manner, then the players should ostracize the player in question. In the same way, if a player character assassin murders another player's cherished character to gain a few experience points, the player of the dead character should not be expected to accept that as part of the game. Players should at all times be encouraged to express different aspects of their personalities; i.e., to role play. But do not expect them to abandon their true selves for a game.

Another aspect of this subject is the knowledge of characters. The Dungeon Master in the role-playing campaign I mentioned above, insisted that our characters, who had presumably lived for twenty or more years, knew nothing that we did not learn during play; they did not know what deities were worshipped; they did not know anything about the flora and fauna of the world; they did not even know the way to the nearest town. I am aware that many Dungeon Masters impose a less stringent form of this rule. This is all well and good, but before enforcing such a rule in a campaign, the Dungeon Master should consider this: six hours of play a week for two or three years can hardly match the experiences and learning of a lifetime (even a lifetime in a medieval society). In my group I allow the characters to know what the players can remember at the game table (the only references allowed are the *Players Handbook* and any notes previously made by the player of the character being played). This works very well for us, because as often as not, the players' memories are faulty or incomplete. They are still frequently surprised and confounded by events and monsters. Of course, our group has been playing only three years, and most of the players avoid intense perusal of the other reference works. This method might not work as well with players who have memorized the *Dungeon Master's Guide, Monster Manual I, Fiend Folio, Deities and Demigods,* and *Monster Manual II.*

I often throw in new monsters and magic items, and alter existing ones, to keep the players from getting complacent. In addition, I do not hesitate to forbid some knowledge or actions. The more rare a monster is, the more likely I am to rule that a character would not have accurate information concerning that particular monster. Example: medium-level player characters could not have perfectly accurate knowledge of all of a demon's or devil's powers. They're lucky if they recognize one, much less know its specific attributes. They might easily know, however, that devils radiate fear. They might also know, from the same rumor-monger, that devils can be held at bay with any holy symbol ("Well, I *thought* that would work!"). The important point is that the Dungeon Master and players should cooperate as a group to create an immensely good time. Our game is great fun and a learning experience; but above all it can be an enduring and rewarding basis for social interaction and important interpersonal relations.

I'd like to address one more aspect of role-playing, and that is the playing of evil characters. I find this distasteful in the extreme, and feel that it lends ammunition to the enemies of role-playing games. The Dungeon Master must, with discretion, play the parts of many evil beings. However, these beings exist as foils to the player characters, and are meant to be destroyed or defeated. The task of destroying these evil beings should not be an easy one. It should be extremely difficult, challenging, and dangerous. But if the characters are champions of good vs. evil (or natural vs. unnatural), and are intelligent, cunning, strong, and somewhat lucky, they should have a fair chance to triumph. If they fail, it should be in pursuit of lofty goals, not base and vile ends.

LAYOVER AT LOSSEND

by Russ Horn

The setting

You are a member of a Pan Galactic Corporation (PGC) Scout and Exploration Team returning to Port Loren from a mining expedition on Gollywog in the White Light system. During the return trip, you are forced to take a five-day layover at Lossend in the Timeon system and wait for another ship. Several members of the Scout and Exploration Team decide to look for temporary employment from local residents.

Characters

Dirk Manhak: Human member of the PGC Scout and Exploration Team.
Strength/Stamina: 45/55
Dexterity/Reaction Speed: 60/60
Intuition/Logic: 65/75
Personality/Leadership: 55/45
Skills: Level 2 Environmental, Level 1 Technician, Level 1 Robotics
Equipment: Standard Survival Kit*

Sarvo "Lightfoot" Grun: Yazirian member of the PGC Scout and Exploration Team.
Strength/Stamina: 60/50
Dexterity/Reaction Speed: 70/70
Intuition/Logic: 60/50
Personality/Leadership: 45/45
Skills: Level 2 Robotics, Level 1 Computer, Level 1 Beam Weapons
SA: Battle Rage (5%), Gliding, Night Vision
Equipment: Standard Survival Kit*

Average Wypong
RW:55, M:45, PS:3, IM:7, RS:65, STA: 65
Equipment: Bow and eight arrows

Description: Wypongs are a race of semi-intelligent apemen. They inhabit remote forested regions far away from civilization. Their society is based upon small clans which rarely grow larger than twenty members. They are physically strong, and their hands and feet are well adapted to climbing trees. They are omnivorous in nature, and they use primitive weapons such as clubs and stones along with the bow and arrow. They speak their own rudimentary language.

When humans and other colonizers first started to fly over their remote territories, the Wypongs became frightened and superstitious. Over time they have come to look upon aircraft as gods.

Dirk and Sarvo, who are good friends, are among those seeking employment on Lossend. A large company has hired them to find the source of some mysterious radio emissions coming from some hills to the northwest. They are loaned a jetcopter and some additional equipment for the job.

Heading in the direction of their destination, they fly over a section of unexplored coniferous forest; the jetcopter's engine suddenly quits. Both members are able to ditch safely, using parawings, and eventually land some distance from where the jetcopter went down. Realizing that much of their equipment still remains on board the jetcopter, they start their hike back through the forest to where the wreck should be.

As they come within sight of the wreck, they see what appears to be three bipedal apelike creatures which are armed with bows and arrows and which are chanting around the downed jetcopter.

Referee's section

As soon as the Wypongs notice Dirk or Sarvo, they will stop their activities and wait for them to approach. One of the Wypongs will then come forward and kneel before the travelers in an act of submission and devotion. Because of their religious beliefs, they will see Dirk and Sarvo akin to gods. If Dirk or Sarvo establish communications through the use of the polyvox or by some other means, they will find that the Wypongs will help them in any way they can so long as they do not have to leave their territory. If either Dirk or Sarvo attack, the Wypongs will defend themselves with bow and arrow. Within five minutes of Dirk and Sarvo's arrival at the crash site, 1d10 additional Wypongs will arrive at the scene, armed in the same fashion as the others.

As a source of expanding this scenario, players may either play one of the provided characters, use them as NPCs, or eliminate them entirely, substituting already-existing player characters. If you use more than two player characters, increase the number of Wypongs encountered proportionately.

The DM may also wish to have the characters or party complete the adventure to the source of the unknown radio emissions, or may decide to develop adventures around the Wypongs.

MONEY MAKES THE WORLD GO ROUND

by Art Dutra

"Do we see any treasure?" is often the first question any seasoned party of adventurers asks after battle. Treasure is that pinnacle of power everyone strives for in real and fantasy worlds. Those who have it crave more, while those who don't have money fight for it.

In fantasy games, gold is normally expected as reward for some daring deed, and be it monster slaying or grave robbing, the reward is usually there (or close by). As the party advances in experience, it will usually seek more daring adventures, take greater risks, and expect more money. Parties begin to complain and lose interest if not enough treasure is available. The same is true if too much wealth is given out. Even when wealth is handed out moderately by DMs, the quantity will always increase as the level of play increases.

Beyond this, however, is the often overlooked DM potential for taking part of the spoils. Many DMs ignore, or just plain don't realize, that it costs money to be trained, to exchange currency, and to live in general. Smart players save every copper piece, and before long the unsuspecting DM has a "superman" menacing his campaign. The characters have acquired so much wealth that few things are outside of their reach. This is very often where "player character demigods" begin. Characters have acquired so much money that they can buy a powerful army, a castle the size of New York, or some ultra-powerful magic item or relic.

DMs, like bankers, must make sure that money is flowing in as well as out. The more generous a DM becomes handing out treasure, the more expensive the players' overhead should become. The DM should not make his characters paupers, but there is no good reason for a 5th-level fighter to have 250,000gp.

Frank Mentzer and E. Gary Gygax have both stated countless times that it takes 5+ years to reach 20th level. Two major factors which would affect the rate of character advancement are undeserved experience points and money. The *DMG* also states that it costs 1,500gp per level per week to be trained for the next level of experience. This means that a 1st level magic-user, whose training will take two weeks, needs 3,000gp to be trained. Generally, most characters never have enough money to be trained immediately. They must adventure further to gain enough money for training with *no* additional experience gained.

A simple rule to follow when distributing wealth in a campaign is that a character should rarely possess more money than experience points. If a character does have more money, it shouldn't last for long. It should be spent on something like the cost of training or building a modest stronghold. DMs who have been playing with a group for a long time would have trouble reducing the amount of treasure normally given out. The players would notice the drop in treasure quickly and probably complain. Instead, the DM must devise more ways of making players give up money.

A common means is taxation. During medieval times, it was not uncommon for kingdoms to tax everyone within their borders (including foreigners) to pay off the cost of a war or perhaps a ruler's exuberant lifestyle. If the DM is determined to get money out of the characters, the tax collector should be just as determined. Make sure that the collector isn't deceived by the party and that he has enough power to back up his "pay or be jailed" terms. If a DM expects the party to protest loudly, or to be ready to fight the tax collector, he should outnumber the party heavily with a group of royal guards. If the party still tries to fight its way out, pound it into the ground! Don't kill the players, but do enough damage to insure payment, thus teaching them not to stand up to impossible situations. If the party does attack the tax collector and his guards, make sure to take out extra in "fines." If the party was extremely difficult, tax and fine the characters, then throw them in jail for awhile. That should cure the party of overconfidence.

One of the most commonly forgotten rules is that, when changing money, the money changer gets 3% of the total, a relatively small fee which shouldn't bother the party. If the party refuses to pay, don't exchange the money. Let the characters walk around with those 10,000cp.

Another neglected rule is that merchants will only pay characters about 80% of face value when buying gems and jewelry from characters. Obviously, the merchant has to make a profit when he resells the item. DMs should also remember that merchants will almost never accept foreign currency as payment. Fines and/or prison terms await merchants who are caught accepting foreign currency as payment. If the party has foreign currency, it should exchange it with a money changer. The party will always get less than it exchanges. The exchange rate should be set by the DM and could range anywhere from 8 for 10 to 2 for 5.

Politics play a key role in the exchange rate. Kingdoms hostile to one another will give each others' currency bad exchange rates, and vice versa. Don't forget the money changer gets 3% for exchanging foreign currency, too.

The prices listed in the *Player's Handbook* are standard for equipment and are open to change. Supply and demand should be taken into account when adjusting prices. If a product is in demand, the price will usually go up. Likewise, if the product is difficult to come by, the price will go up. A fighter looking for armor in a region poor in metals will pay a very high price. In a campaign, upkeep and maintenance come into play. How long can a character go crawling around in a slimy dungeon with the same clothes on? Not very long if he expects to get into any decent taverns.

Along with clothing, other expendable items must be replaced often, like oils, arrows, rope, and torches. Food is the biggest expendable item there is. If a party has been traveling for two weeks, make sure two weeks' worth of rations were bought and consumed. Don't forget

food for the war dogs and horses, too. After all, they can't live off of the land forever (especially in deserts, etc.) and remain loyal and in top health.

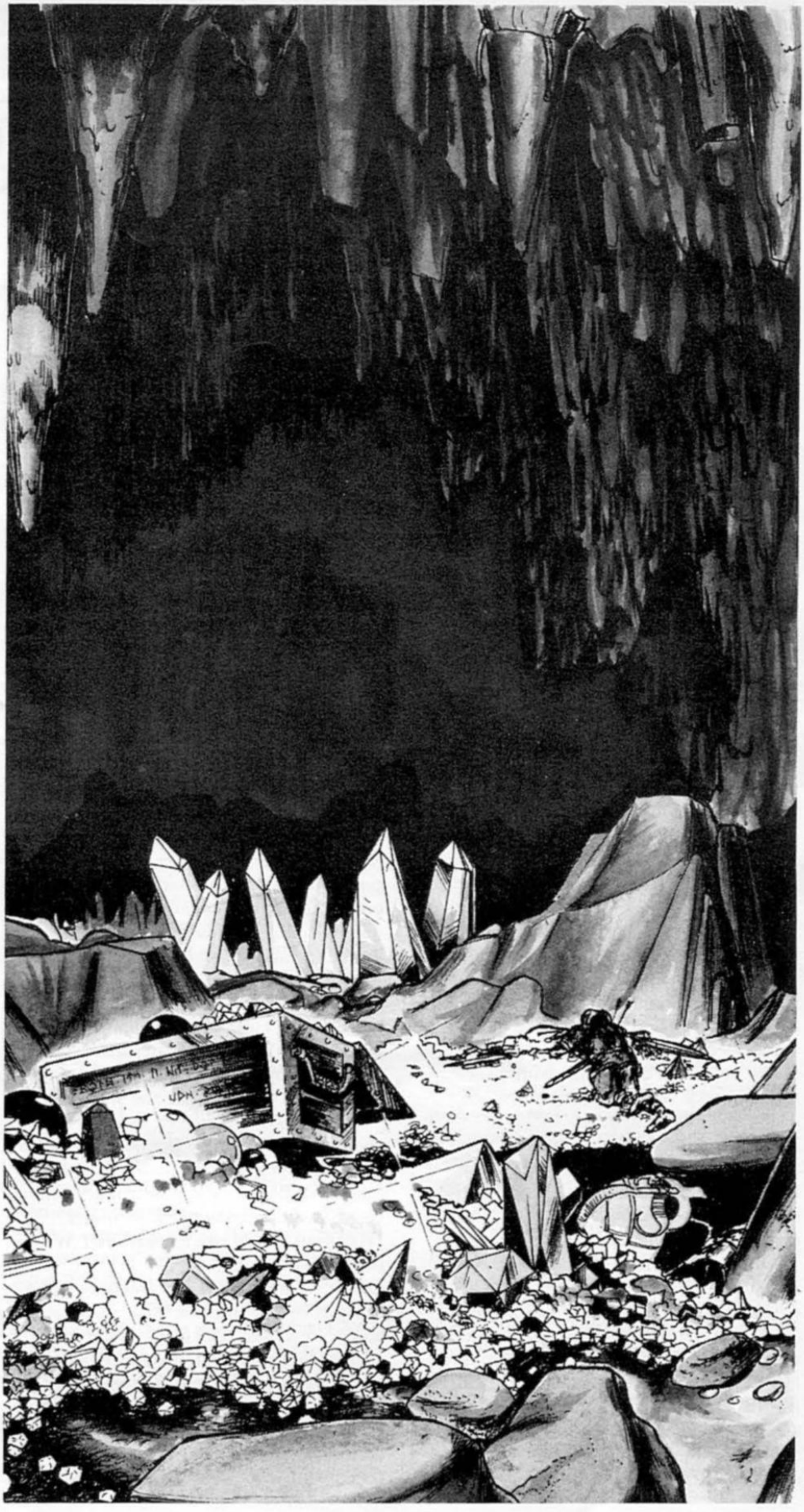
One of the best ways to take money from characters who have too much is through direct contact with NPCs. How do characters learn of adventures anyway? Many times they learn of "haunted castles and strange happenings" through rumors. One must remember that most information is not free. It may cost the party as little as an ale, or as much as 1,000gp. To keep the party paying for information, remember that the more that is paid out, the more information that will be gained and the more reliable it will be. Gold has the unique ability to loosen tongues and cure amnesia.

Other ways of taking money from characters by using NPCs are through ransom, bribery, and blackmail. A group of 1st-3rd level characters is slowly riding down a deserted road. Suddenly a large, ancient dragon swoops in on the party. They try to outrun the dragon but to no avail. The dragon cuts them off and bellows, "Stop! I wish to bargain for your lives!" At this point any 1st-3rd level characters with the common sense to stay alive are going to stop and at least listen to what the beast has to say. "I merely wish to consume your mounts for lunch," hisses the vile creature, "nothing more." Common sense and the will to live should tell the characters to dismount,take their equipment, and run for their lives.

A situation like the one above could make an excellent scenario for the characters to avenge the deaths of their prized mounts (once they've gained more experience, of course). When a DM relies on bribery, blackmail, etc., to lighten the party's overflowing money pouches, it should be done in a unique way. Players tend to lose much of their hostility towards a DM when they are having fun.

If the party still seems a little cash heavy, there's always a more direct method. Robbery works extremely well on thieves, since they're generally the least paranoid about personal theft. Ever see the expression on a player's face when his thief character is robbed blind?

If the party is always light on funds, any amount of treasure is a welcome sight. The previous guidelines should help DMs run a far more enjoyable campaign. These rules will also help characters advance upwards smoothly, without letting things get out of hand. But, above all else, remember not to go too hard on the players. Role-playing games *are* for fun.



DISPEL CONFUSION

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®
Fantasy Adventure Game

DQ: Can a gold dragon use its breath weapon when in human or animal form?
DA: No. The breath weapon is a physical function of the creature's dragon form and cannot be used when the dragon assumes another shape. It must change back to its original form before a breath weapon can be used.

DQ: The *Dungeon Masters Guide* says that characters must attack with "the flat of the sword" to subdue a dragon, and that missiles and spells cannot be used for subduing it. What about non-edged weapons (i.e. mace, war hammer, etc.)?
DA: Yes, blunt melee weapons such as maces, war hammers, and clubs can also be used to subdue a dragon. Subduing a dragon involves trying to "batter" it into submission without killing it. Your attacks must not be potentially lethal because you are simply using a show of force to convince it to surrender. You can control your attacks with most melee weapons by stating your intention to use them in a less deadly manner. But missile weapons and offensive spells are always potentially lethal because you cannot avoid doing actual hit points of damage with a successful attack. Therefore, they are not usable for subduing it.

DQ: What would a weapon's AC be against the attack of a rust monster?
DA: Weapons don't have an armor class unless otherwise stated. Use the AC of the *character* being attacked to determine whether the rust monster hits. For example, suppose you have a character with normal sword, chain mail, and shield (giving a total AC of 4). You encounter a rust monster. It must hit AC 4 with its Hit Roll to rust one of your metal items. If it fails to hit AC 4, it misses your character entirely. The DM may choose which of your metal items is destroyed on the monster's first successful hit, or it may be rolled randomly. For example, the DM may choose to have the first hit destroy the shield on the grounds that you are moving it to intercept the monster's blows. (Remember that your character's AC will drop when either armor or shield is destroyed.) A rust monster can automatically hit a weapon lying unguarded on the floor.

DQ: How does the DM determine which weapon a humanoid monster (orc, goblin, hobgoblin, etc.) will use?
DA: The DM should plan the monster's weapons right along with the rest of the scenario when designing a homemade dungeon. Choices should take into account the location, size, and purpose of the lair, how and where the creatures are getting the weapons, weapon preferences of the monsters (if any), and (if the variable weapon damage option is used) how much damage the DM intends the creatures to do. Size of the creature is also a factor. Small humanoids such as kobolds probably favor small weapons just as halflings do; man-sized creatures such as orcs generally use the same types of weapons as humans. Weapon choices for random encounters should take into account any of the above factors that pertain to the situation.

DQ: Besides the weapons mentioned in the halfling class description (Revised Basic Rules), are there any other weapons a halfling cannot use?
DA: A halfling may use any small-sized weapon (such as a dagger, short sword, or short bow). They may not use large-sized weapons (such as two-handed swords, longbows, battle axes, pole arms, etc.). Normal swords may be two-handed.

DQ: Can a troll use a crossbow? Why or why not?
DA: Given time it could probably figure out how to use one, but trolls normally attack with their bare hands since they do far more damage with their teeth and claws than they could with a weapon. Don't forget that a troll gets three attacks/round in melee, whereas it would only be entitled to one with a weapon.

DQ: Can spells be used against a creature in gaseous form?
DA: It depends on the spell. Spells with a "touch" range cannot be used on gaseous creatures since they have no solid material form. Area effect spells, such as *Fireball* and *Charm Person* have their normal effects (saving throws apply). A *Magic Missile* spell will also work provided that the caster has some means of seeing invisible creatures in operation at the time.

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons®
Fantasy Adventure Game

ADQ: Could an illusionist cast a *Prismatic Wall* on a creature? Would the creature take 70 hps, death, petrification, etc.? Would the creature get a saving throw or would the illusionist have to roll "to hit" the creature?
ADA: A creature might be caught inside the *Wall* when it goes up, but it will suffer no ill effects. The *Prismatic Wall* affects only those entering it — there is no effect on a creature already inside.

ADQ: If a magic-user, illusionist, cleric, druid, ranger, or paladin loses a level due to energy drain, what happens to the spells already memorized? Does the character lose some?
ADA: Yes. Spellcasters who lose levels also lose use of the spells gained as a result of those levels. When the level drain occurs, use the appropriate "Spells Usable By Class and Level" Table to determine how many spells of each type can be carried at the character's new level. Then randomly determine which of the spells *currently* known will be immediately forgotten to bring the spell load in line with the character's lower level.

ADQ: On page 104 of the *Players Handbook*, "parrying" is mentioned briefly. I find no mention of it in the *Dungeon Masters Guide*. Could a 13th-level fighter parry two attacks per round? Parry once and attack once? Can you parry multiple attacks?
ADA: A character who chooses to parry can do nothing else that round, so no return attacks are possible (regardless of

the number of attacks to which the character would otherwise be entitled). The parrying bonus can be used only against one attack per round. Subtract the strength bonus (if any) from the attacker's "to hit" roll. (Note that only very strong characters benefit from parrying.)

ADQ: *Monster Manual II* says that Belial is the most handsome of all the arch-devils. Is he handsomer than Asmodeus?

ADA: No, Asmodeus is the handsomest devil. Since Asmodeus is in charge, he is obviously the cleverest and most charismatic of all the infernal beings.

ADQ: Are dual-classed characters entitled to additional weapon proficiencies when they start the second class? For example, suppose a 6th-level fighter with a strength of 16 and a wisdom of 17 becomes a cleric. He was proficient with six weapons as a fighter: longsword, long bow, dagger, crossbow, javelin, and medium lance. He cannot use any of those weapons and still gain experience as a cleric. Is he now eligible for the two weapon proficiencies that a first-level cleric can have in addition to the first six?

ADA: Yes. Weapon proficiencies for dual-classed and multi-classed characters are cumulative, so characters are entitled to proficiencies as per the appropriate levels for all classes professed. A dual-classed character gains additional weapon proficiencies as per the second class. Note that no further proficiencies for the original class may ever be gained after the character takes up the second profession.

ADQ: Can a spellcaster opt to do less damage than he is entitled to with a spell such as *Fireball*?

ADA: Not unless the spell description specifically allows it. Damage from *Fireballs, Lightning Bolts*, etc., is a set range depending upon the caster's level. The caster cannot control or lessen the damage. So a *Fireball* from a 6th-level caster will do 6d6, whether the mage wants that much or not.

ADQ: What is the correct hit dice listing for the pyrolisk? *Monster Manual II* lists it as 43.

ADA: The pyrolisk should have 4+3 hit dice, not 43.

ADQ: What would happen to a creature going through a *Passwall* tunnel if it suddenly closed up?

ADA: The creature would be imprisoned in that spot and would probably die from suffocation if not rescued within a few minutes.

ADQ: Can an illusionist create a creature with a gaze attack from the *Shadow Monsters* spell? Will the gaze attack work since the monsters created by the spell are in part real?

ADA: The gaze attack is real some of the time. Use the percentage of normal damage potential given by the spell description (i.e. 20% for *Shadow Monsters*, 40% for *Demi-Shadow Monsters*, and 60% for *Shades*) as the chance that the effects of the gaze attack will be real. Check each time the gaze is used. Victims are still entitled to the appropriate saving throw.

BOOT HILL®

Wild West Game

BHQ: On page 17 of the BOOT HILL Rulebook, it states that a civilian scout for the army earns $75 per month. Yet in DRAGON® Magazine #76, in the article "Saved by the Cavalry," it says that a civilian scout earns $1 to $2 per day, which would be a monthly total of $30 to $60. Which is correct?

BHA: Different sources give different data. According to most contemporary accounts, $1 to $2 per day is correct for 1876. A scout captain or a veteran might receive more, as might a civilian scout in the 1890s. As a rule of thumb scouts are a little better paid than soldiers, but not greatly so.

BHQ: That same article points out that "While brawling, soldiers receive a 5% bonus on their hitting and chance to do damage." The system for brawling as explained in the rulebook uses no percentages and has only one roll necessary. How can this 5% be used on the brawling tables?

BHA: The BOOT HILL game system was to be redesigned, using percentages for all rolls, but that has been postponed. Consider the 5% bonus as a +1 to the fighter's roll (1/20th of 100% = 5%).

BHQ: The article also explains how soldiers gain experience points, and gives a chart detailing their progression in rank based upon experience points gained. I don't understand how this works with experience as explained in the rulebook. How does EXPERIENCE and SURVIVAL MODIFICATION work? What happens when you survive 12 gunfights?

BHA: The rules let a player roll for initial experience, and the character gains experience for every gunfight survived thereafter. In terms of the military, char-

acters can gain experience up to 12, but no further. If your character is a soldier, you use the experience as listed in the article to advance your character. Survival also allows a character to gain experience for other scores.

A character who has survived 12 gunfights or more may roll with a +10 to his score, but remember that characters do age. (See page 17 in the rulebook for aging effects.)

GAMMA WORLD®

Science Fantasy Game

GWQ: My players complain because I often make normal-looking plants and animals do mutated things. Is it necessary to change the appearance of a plant to make it mutated?

GWA: It is perfectly acceptable to make your apples blow up when bitten or your watermelons spew seeds when cut, but you should warn your players that such things have been known to happen in the past. After such a warning, whatever happens should be fairly consistent. If a fruit explodes because of a regional mutation, then all the fruit in that area should explode. If rabbits blow up when killed, then all rabbits in that area should blow up when killed.

GWQ: My player character has a dexterity of 10. My GM tells me that this means he can only jump six feet. He is nine feet tall. I don't think this limitation is fair.

GWA: There must be some method to determine how far the average character can jump. If your character has a special mutation or you feel that for some reason your abilities are better than normal, it is

proper to ask for special consideration. Just take what is given to you with good grace, and don't complain if it isn't all you want.

GWQ: My character has Nyctophobia, and the GM says that the character will be frozen with fear even in the shadows of a forest. Doesn't this make the character pretty unplayable?

GWA: That interpetation of the rules is stronger than it should be. The defects are designed to help the characters as well as make them think of ways to get around the defects. Remember that the monsters you face with this or similar defects will be easier to conquer. Keep trying to think of ways to overcome the handicap. If it becomes too difficult, then start a new character.

GWQ: I have a player in my game who wants to use a dinosaur for the basic animal stock. What do you think?

GWA: With all the mutations running around the GAMMA WORLD game, it would be possible for big reptiles to return. Let them start out as anything they want unless you feel that it will radically alter the balance of your game. Feel free to give them some of the defects that the dinosaurs could have had, like being slowed down by cold climates, or having a nervous system that wouldn't let them know they had been bitten until ten minutes after the act.

GWQ: My character became a member of the Archivists Alliance, and now my GM won't let him use laser guns because she says they are considered special by the group and must be stored away. Is that the way it should work?

GWA: That is a perfect example of the kinds of things the Archivists would do. You have to accept this and roll with the punches.

STAR FRONTIERS™

Science-Fiction Game

SFQ: How many credits does a telescopic sight cost?

SFA: A good telescopic sight costs 50% of the cost of the weapon for which it is intended. For example, a laser rifle costs 800 credits, so a scope for it costs 400 credits. But a scope for an automatic rifle (300 credits) costs only 150 credits.

SFQ: Which weapons can telescopic sights be put on?

SFA: Telescopic sights are usually used on rifle-type weapons, since they are designed to help improve aim on long-range shots. Scopes can be used on pistols, but this is not common due to the weapon's shorter range.

It is possible to mount a scope on any beam weapon except an electrostunner, any projectile weapon except a machine gun or recoilless rifle, and any gyrojet weapon except a grenade mortar or a rocket launcher. (Shoulder-firing weapons like the latter two come with sights already affixed. The adjustments for the sight are already figured into the weapon statistics. The additional benefit of dropping one range category only applies to detachable sights.) Sights cannot be used on grenades or archaic weapons.

SFQ: Sathar are reported to be unaffected by electrical shocks and doze grenades. Are they also unaffected by sonic stunners?

SFA: No, according to the latest reports, sonic stunners and other sonic attack forms have normal effects upon Sathar.

SFQ: Several illustrations depict Dralasites using their racial ability of elasticity to flatten down, peer over objects or around corners, or even form a semblance of facial features. The Expanded Rules (page 6) give some idea as to the number of limbs and fingers that a Dralasite can form, but do not help in determining what other elastic functions the Dralasite can perform. Is there a guideline, or should the moderator make spontaneous decisions?

SFA: There is no definitive set of rules on what a Dralasite can or cannot do with elasticity — it would be impossible to cover all the bases. But some guidelines do exist. The minimum diameter for the Dralasite's body is that of a limb — 10 cm. Conceivably, the Dralasite could thin its entire body to a cylinder of that thickness, but no thinner or the internal organs would be crushed. So it could not flatten enough to slide under doors, for example.

A Dralasite's skin is not self-adhering. That is, it cannot bend a finger around to the wrist and attach it like a piece of chewing gum to a desk. So, although it can wrap itself around to completely enclose an air pocket (for floating), the air is held in by muscular contraction — not absorbed into the creature's body. The Dralasite could conceal small objects this way too, by wrapping around them and holding them inside.

Assume that any function a Human or Yazirian could perform (such as leaning around a corner or peering over a barricade) can be performed by the Dralasite with a small stretch. Greater feats of elasticity can be performed within the stated limits, but they take time. The referee can determine how much given time a given feat should take using the growing or withdrawal of a limb as a guideline.

SFQ: The *Sundown on Starmist* module makes several references to the "heavy weapons" skills of PCs in the game, while the Advanced Rulebook (page 11) indicates that these heavy weapons skills are germaine to the regular weapons skills of the same name.

SFA: Heavy Weapons is not a separate skill. Chance of success is determined according to the category of the weapon in the usual manner, but a heavy weapons modifier is applied as well. See page 22 of the Expanded Rules for details.

SFQ: When a Yazirian enters battle rage and gains the "+20 to hit in melee," does this indicate that he hits better with beam weapons, gyrojet weapons, projectile weapons, thrown weapons, or just with melee weapons, martial arts, and bare hands?

SFA: The battle rage modifier applies only to *melee*, as stated. Use it when attacking hand-to-hand with melee weapons, bare hands, or martial arts, but not with ranged weapons.

SFQ: What is a robot's "to hit" in melee and with a ranged weapon?

SFA: A robot's basic chance to hit (for both ranged combat and melee) is 30% plus (ten times the robot's level). The Initiative Modifier for a robot is its level plus 3. All other combat modifiers apply just as they would for player characters.

SFQ: On page 59 of the Expanded Rules, you have included a table covering the average abilities of all the five races for help in creating NPCs. What does the "PS" stand for before the Initiative Modifier?

SFA: "PS" stands for "Punching Score."

SFQ: Since Vrusk have more than two legs, if they fall and sprain or break a leg, their other legs could make up for the loss, couldn't they?

SFA: To a certain extent. A Vrusk with a broken leg can move at 1/2 the normal rate rather than not at all. When the leg is splinted, the Vrusk can move at 3/4 of the normal rate.

SFQ: If a Dralasite should fall, could they flatten themselves or make themselves round enough to absorb any damage?

SFA: No. Dralasites cannot use their elasticity to avoid falling damage or to withdraw limbs so that they will not be sprained or broken in a fall. It takes ten minutes to withdraw a single limb. The falling Dralasite would hit the ground long before any limbs could be withdrawn

for protection, and its body would take the damage in any case. If limbs are injured in a fall, the Dralasite can subsequently spend time withdrawing and regrowing the injured limbs, which will remove the penalties but not heal any of the damage.

SFQ: How can I get money for my characters so that they can buy guns and ammo?

SFA: Most characters earn their money by hiring themselves out as mercenaries for special missions. They are professional adventurers who are paid for succeeding in their assignments (i.e. adventures). The employer pays them for an hourly or a daily rate for their services. The rate of pay for each mission is up to the referee because it depends on the character's skill and the nature of the mission.

SFQ: May any character drive a vehicle?

SFA: No. According to the rules, only a technician with the "Operating Machinery" skill may drive a vehicle. Remember that in a futuristic society transportation will probably be so sophisticated that people who can drive will be the exception instead of the rule. On a civilized planet there is no need to drive — you simply climb on a public transportation system and go where you please. Therefore, only technicians who work with those machines *need* to know how to drive vehicles. So if you plan to adventure on a planet without much technology, be sure to take along a driver!

Referees who feel this rule is too restrictive are free to modify it for their individual campaigns. For example, you might make a "house rule" that anyone can drive a ground car, but a technician is needed for any other vehicle.

TOP SECRET®

Espionage Game

TSQ: What is a wired probe mike?

TSA: A wired probe mike is a microphone set into the end of a long, cylindrical metal probe. The shape of the probe allows the microphone to be inserted through cracks in interior walls or other small spaces to monitor conversations within.

TSQ: What is the chance that an agent can physically get past barbed wire? What kind of damage does barbed wire do to an agent who is caught in it?

TSA: Agents attempting to get through an area obstructed by barbed wire must roll against Coordination to avoid entanglement. The Admin is free to modify or ignore this roll as desired, depending upon the circumstances involved. (For example, if an agent is traveling in the dark and fails to check for anything unusual at the top of a wall before going over, the Admin may choose not to allow a Coordination roll, and rule instead that the agent has simply blundered into the wire.)

Agents who fail the Coordination roll are caught on the barbs (by skin, equipment, or clothing) and take 1 point of damage per 10′ section of wire or part thereof involved. For example, an agent caught by a single strand of wire stretched along the top of a wall takes 1 point of damage. An agent trying to crawl between 2 strands of barbed wire (such as a fence in a cow pasture) is caught by 2 different pieces of wire and takes 2 points. An agent trapped in a coiled mass of barbed wire is considered to be caught by at least 3 individual strands, and so will take at least three points of damage.

No further movement is possible until the agent is free of the wire. Each successive turn the agent may try to work free by making a new Coordination roll, but the damage equal to the initial amount is inflicted for each turn that the agent tries to work loose (successful or not). The agent may at any time choose to tear free instead of working the caught clothing, or whatever, loose, but this will do damage equal to double the initial amount in addition to tearing clothing and/or damaging equipment (Admin's direction).

TSQ: What is the damage for electrified barbed wire?

TSA: Electrified barbed wire will do double the normal amount of damage on the first turn, and normal damage thereafter.

TSQ: What are the rules for climbing?

TSA: Roll against Coordination for every 10′ climbed vertically. If successful, the agent has climbed the 10′ without incident. If unsuccessful at any time, the agent falls from the height reached up to this point. (This presupposes that the agent is either climbing a surface that a normal person could climb, such as a fence or rough stone wall, or is using proper equipment to scale a more difficult surface. No agent will be able to climb a sheer glass wall unaided.)

TSQ: How much do tear gas and mace grenades cost?

TSA: Both tear gas and mace grenades cost $12.00 apiece.

TSQ: Are there carry-along magazines for regular rifles? If so, how much do they cost?

TSA: Yes. Magazines for regular rifles cost the same as those for assault rifles.

We know you're out there. You've sent us letters full of in-depth game questions, complaints about defective TSR merchandise, and requests for information of all types. You want your answers quickly (or at least before the third World War). We would love to respond — but there's one problem. We don't know where you are. Some of you haven't given us your correct address; others didn't give us any address at all. The office crystal ball blew up last week, so we can't find you by scrying — and we've used up our *Commune* spell for the month. If you see your name listed below, please write to Penny Petticord, c/o TSR, Inc., P.O. Box 756, Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, 53147 and let us know where your hideout is.

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